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Las características estéticas en el teatro de Wole Soyinka

The aesthetic features in Wole Soyinka's plays

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WOLE SOYINKA

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TESIS DOCTORAL INTERNACIONAL DE:
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DOCTORAL DISSERTATION PRESENTED BY

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DEDICATIONS

To my mother and to the memory of my father.

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INTRODUCTION

1-Wole Soyinka's Theatrical World: Epistemological Analysis.

In his *Meditations on Quixote*, José Ortega y Gasset says of a writer's choice of a particular literary genre that it reflects "at one and the same time a certain thing to be said and the only way to say it fully."¹ In the context of the present dissertation, the "certain thing to be said" is the interpretation of a highly complex term and "the only way to say it fully" is through a literary mode variously dubbed aesthetic features.

Aesthetics is a very ambiguous term nowadays, mainly due to the amount of criticism. It could be defined as a constellation of perceptions through literary sensibility. Aesthetics can also be viewed as the formal study of art especially relating to the enjoyment or study of beauty. The term aesthetics may also mean the description of an object or a work of art that shows great beauty. Aesthetics is concerned with the beauty, arts, and the understanding of beautiful things. As Obafemi says "aesthetics deals with any art form and theatrical arts in particular which is a corporate multi-dimensional, multi-sensory art that depends on its social context and its audience"². The term 'aesthetics' should by derivation mean the inquiry into the nature of sense – perception. It has been gradually narrowed into this sense to cover the experience of beauty and sometimes that of artistic beauty³.

In addition, aesthetics represents what a monarch is in politics, the church in religion, capitals in economy, and middle class in society. In this respect, aesthetics addresses freely all the aspects of human life. However, a wide range of theoretical studies have been produced on the term aesthetics in general, aesthetics in literature in particular, and on the noun phrase aesthetic features. We choose to focus our understanding of an aesthetic feature on its definition that, it is a constellation of textual features, the marker of an author's literary identity which is identified only through an aesthetic sensibility and judgement.

¹ José Ortega y Gasset, *Meditations on Quixote*, trans. Julian Marias (New York: W. W. Norton, 1961), p.113.

² Olu Obafemi, *Politics and Aesthetics: Essays in Drama Theatre and Performance*, (Ilorin: Haytee Press and Publishing Co. Ltd, 2008), p. 56.

³ *Encyclopaedia Britannica* volume 1 (London: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1962), p. 263.

According to Olu Obafemi⁴, an authentic Nigerian theatre aesthetics and ideology can be located in the theatre of the second generation of literary dramatists such as Ola Rotimi, Wole Soyinka, J.P.Clark, Zulu Sofola and so many others. At different levels of accomplishment, the plays of these dramatists are best characterised as theatre of ideology and politics committed to social and historical reconstruction through class struggle and a proletarian consciousness. Olu Obafemi⁵ also asserts that literary dramatists like Wole Soyinka and J.P.Clark have established the dramaturgy potential of ritual and folklore for aesthetic and political discourse in many plays including '*Kongi's Harvest*', '*The Road*', and '*Ozidi*'. In these plays, folklore was exploited as technical frameworks and as conveyers of social statement and as a principle for establishing dramatic aesthetics especially in the new democratic experience.

One of the concerns of aesthetics has been the negative assessment of African art, such as the claim that the category of realism does not apply to African art. This may also mean that African artists are incapable of realistic representation. William Abraham⁶ argues that such criticism quite misses the point of African art. He demonstrates that African art is both realistic and figurative, depending on its specific social function. Abraham's broad concern is to show African culture including African art, as expressions of an essential African cosmology⁷. Yet, Abraham's position is typically that of an African aesthete whose objectives are mainly to elaborate the general aesthetic laws. This effort has been significantly extended to what is known as Black Aesthetics, a movement rooted in the 1960's anti colonialism in Africa. The work of the diaspora scholars, such as Addison Gayle's *The Black Aesthetics* (1972), was vital to the process of defining African aesthetics, as it offered a set of clearly defined theoretical tools for the analysis of black arts, for their distinctive aesthetic qualities. Accordingly, black aesthetics is bound up with the black person's awareness of a negating social reality and his attempt to negate that reality by means of a counter – reality, that of the values of black people. Thus, the aim is to found a set of aesthetic

⁴ Olu Obafemi, *Politics and Aesthetics: Essays in Drama, Theatre and Performance*, op. cit. p. 60.

⁵ Ibid., pp. 45-46.

⁶ "Reality in African Aesthetics and Literary Criticism" in *Science Encyclopaedia: History of ideas*, Volume 5, p. 113.

⁷ Ibid., p. 151.

principles which will do justice to the quality of black works. It is in this instance that the slogan “Black is beautiful” emerges.

Largely, this quest for an essential Pan – African culture is what animates one of the earliest and most persistent cultural movements of the twentieth century: Negritude, begun in the 1930’s in France by Leopold Sédar Senghor and Aimé Césaire, among others, sought to define and represent the essential core of African values as embodied in African spiritual experience. In Senghor’s case this took the form of a preoccupation with the representation of the ancestral presence in literature and a positive revalorisation of black identity. Additionally, for Senghor, African art is conceived as inherently committed because it is intrinsically social and communal, as opposed to the individualism of European art. Senghor is also often quoted as having proclaimed “Emotion is black as reason is Greek.”⁸

For Soyinka, Negritude’s major weakness is that it articulates rather than enacts its radical identity. As Soyinka says, “a tiger does not pronounce its tigritude, it pounces on its prey”.⁹ Its influence is evident in the whole ideology of black consciousness particular in some of the radical attempts to produce anti colonial African aesthetics. However, Soyinka’s commitment to developing a distinct African aesthetics is one of the most ambitious among African writers. He produces a cosmological aesthetics from his reading of Yoruba culture mediated by Nietzsche’s conception of Greek mythology in *Birth of Tragedy*, fashioning his own theory of tragedy. According to Soyinka, Yoruba art is both mimetic and transformative of the structure of traditional Yoruba cosmology as opposed to the tradition of “art for art’s sake”.¹⁰

Furthermore, he argues that African reality can best be understood as a simultaneous inhabitation of the world of the living and the dead as well as the present and the past. Thus Soyinka’s theory of mimesis works with a more complex idea of reality than we are offered in the founding text of mimetic theory, Aristotle’s poetics. When one began to wonder if Soyinka’s criticism had exhausted itself and anything new could be said about Africa’s most complex and prodigious talents, comes a revisionist study from one of the members of the moribund “Ibadian Ife group” that

⁸ Daniel Maximin, ‘Le Théâtre de Wole Soyinka’, in *Revue Présence Africaine*, 79, (Paris : Présence Africaine, 1971), p. 104.

⁹ “Reality in African Aesthetics and Literary Criticism”. *Science Encyclopaedia: History of ideas*, Volume 5, op. cit., p. 559.

¹⁰ *Encyclopaedia Britannica* volume 1, op. cit., p. 264.

offers a new approach between Soyinka's literary writings and his political activism. Biodun Jeyifo brings Soyinka's criticism up to date by systematically integrating its different phases, and also provides one of the most exhaustive and insightful analyses of Soyinka's fictional works constructing a post – colonial, even a postmodernist Soyinka. Then, the tendency in Soyinka's criticism is to view the activist writer's aesthetics and political radicalism in isolation or even to see them as oppositional. Jeyifo's correlation between Soyinka's political risktaking with artistic gambles is a formidable task. He makes the Nigerian Nobel Laureate's titanic personality the focal point for examining his literary corpus. Jeyifo considers that the tragic mytho poesis which he places at the centre of Soyinka's aesthetic philosophy has increasingly been questioned by the post- independence generation; the continuing relevance of Soyinka's aesthetics needs to be engaged more critically.

In addition, drama is the genre Soyinka excels in. Jeyifo submits Soyinka's conversion of ritual formation into a vigorous theatrical expression to a critical examination. By showing that Soyinka's use of the most autochthonous, pristine ritual as emancipatory, Jeyifo attempts to balance Soyinka's strong faith in the interface between drama and ritual with his interrogation of the values of the rituals he himself employs in his plays. So, emphasizing that Soyinka's drama must be understood first and foremost as theatre, Jeyifo extends the notion of "the ritual problematic"¹¹ from Soyinka to African dramaturgy and African aesthetics as a whole. As Walunyama¹² states, Soyinka's ability to play with both Greek and Yoruba drama and tragic themes has made his work unique. His analysis of the post-colonial absurdities of Nigerian and African power dynamics and his call for an "organic revolution"¹³ that derives its authenticity from Yoruba mythology has also made his productions controversial. Then, he recounts the representation and play with Yoruba myth and ritual drama that runs through Soyinka's work. He demonstrates recurrent anarchist themes. The key to understanding Walunyama's exposition is his definition of anarchism. It is the desire of the individual concerned to deconstruct the social, economic and political institutions. They reflect the values of modern civilization as conceptualized through the prevailing ideology in order to pave the way for the recuperation of primordial

¹¹ Biodun Jeyifo, *Wole Soyinka: Politics, Poetics and Post-colonialism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 322.

¹² Joseph Walunywa, *Post-Colonial African Theory and Practice: Wole Soyinka's Anarchism*, (Ph.D. Diss Syracuse University, 1971), n.p. <http://www.emory.edu/ENGLISH/bahri/soyinka.html> (March 2015).

¹³ Ibid.

culture of endogenous societies¹⁴. This may also mean that it is the consistent resistance, the desire to break free from all forces that seek to confine either the individual or the community within any established social, economic, or political constitutional barricade¹⁵.

Furthermore, black aesthetics and afro-centrism are reactive discourses, counter – discourses against the dominant or hegemonic discourses that subordinate them. In this context, black aesthetics is the effort of Wole Soyinka.

On the issue of the post colonial aesthetics, Ngugi wa Thiong'o¹⁶ writes that African performance has always been central to questions of social being. Performance was part of the anti-colonial resistance and after independence part of the questioning of the new postcolonial realities, with theatre becoming the site of struggle for social democracy. Not surprisingly, Africa 's performance was the first to be assaulted by the cultural forces of colonialism to give space for a colonised being. The same colonised being, mutating into a neo-colonial dictator sees theatre as a threat, and consequently, he often sends theatre practitioners into prisons, exile, or death in some cases. But theatre refuses to die either as text or as practice. It becomes a crucial part of the entire process of decolonization and understanding of modernity.

Afolayan Bosede¹⁷ writes that Soyinka's aesthetics cannot be easily compartmentalised because he has evolved over the years a variety of dramatic styles. Despite this seeming obstacle, one can read some meaning into the variety. According to Osofisan¹⁸, plays like *The Trials of Brother Jero*, *The Strong Breed*, *The Swamp Dwellers* and *The Lion and the Jewel* can be regarded as Soyinka's "easy" plays. Soyinka's meaning and style are quite clear and simple in these plays. However, with his more "serious" plays, Soyinka's themes become weighty. It is in both the "easy" and "serious" plays that Soyinka's aesthetics can be deduced. In *The Strong Breed*, Soyinka's mythic imagination is explored. He dwells on the Yoruba myth of sacrificial agents or what can also be called "scapegoatism" to convey his message.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 21.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 75.

¹⁶ Ngugi wa Thiong'o, *Theatre and Postcolonial Desire* xii.

¹⁷ Afolayan Bosede, "Kill the Father: Soyinka's aesthetics and Significance for Osofisan's Dramaturgy." file:///C:/Users/Anicet/Downloads/KILL_20THE_20FATHER.pdf.

¹⁸ Femi Osofisan, "Wole Soyinka and a Living Dramatist" in *Insidious Treasons* 38.

Let us elaborate a bit more on the term we have mentioned above. In fact, scapegotism is the act or the practice of assigning blame or failure for a different or larger problem to another, as to deflect attention or responsibility away from oneself¹⁹. The use of myth is one aspect of Soyinka's art that is prominent. Biodun Jeyifo²⁰ asserts that "Soyinka's mythopoeic aesthetics is deeply rooted in Yoruba mythology and ritual archetypes". In his use of this myth, he has been able to "humanise" the idea of sacrificial agents as a common fact of life and not the barbarity and mere show of crudity with which the western world have viewed it.

The central action in most of Soyinka's plays is the festival. His plays bring the whole of the community on stage in celebration. The plays celebrate the traditional ethos of the people. The spectacle, richness of dialogue, the drum, dance and songs portray the rich culture of the people and ultimately show his plays as Total Theatre. Soyinka's characters of note bear the "Ogunian" characteristics. They are like Ogun with their creative and destructive essences.

Soyinka has also made a great use of other writers' works. He adapted for the stage Euripides' *The Bacchae* where he draws similarities between the essence, worship and features of Ogun and Dionysus. According to Gbemisola Adeoti²¹, Soyinka has also adapted *King Ubu* by Jarry Alfred into *King Baabu* which is a sardonic representation of the years of political "insanity" of the Late General Sani Abacha of Nigeria. At this level of the study, we could evoke the term intertextuality, that is the shaping of a text's meaning by other text.

Language in Soyinka's works forms another area of his uniqueness. His language in his serious plays has been found to be inaccessible. His images and diction are obscure and tortuous. His work is usually shrouded in mystery and incomprehension. He has been said to be engaged in "linguistic gymnastics". The female voice in Soyinka's plays is usually a "silent" one.

¹⁹ <http://www.dictionary.com/browse/scapegoatism>
<https://www.quora.com/Psychology-of-Everyday-Life-What-is-scapegoatism-and-how-does-it-play-out-in-families-and-in-the-work-place>.

²⁰ Biodun Jeyifo (ed.) "Introduction – Wole Soyinka and the Tropes of Disalienation" in *Art, Dialogue and Outrage*. Ibadan: New Horn, 1988. pp VIII – XXXI.

²¹ Adeoti Gbemisola, *Aesthetics of Adaptation in Contemporary Nigerian Drama*, Lagos : CBAAC, 2010. pp. 32-38.

Christiane Fioupou²² explores Wole Soyinka's plays in the complexity of its mobile networks and forges connections to the central and ambivalent figure of Ogun, the Yoruba god of iron, creativity and destruction. She writes that Wole Soyinka draws on the wealth of African cultures to reinterpret the mythic and metaphysical space of Yoruba.

In the book edited by Ernst Bloch et al. and entitled *Aesthetics and Politics*²³ Georg Lukács' whose article, 'Realism in the Balance' pinpoints how the revolutionary bourgeoisie conducted a violent struggle in the interests of its own class, and made use of every means at its disposal, including those of imaginative literature. The revolutionary proletariat could do with at least one little Cervantes to arm it with a similar weapon.

In the same vein, and referring to Achebe, Ernest N. Emenyonu and Iniobong I. Uko (ed.)²⁴ state that the Nigerian writer formulates two inescapable tenets, place and history which help creating African identity. Place, history, identity, all subsume the "typicality" of African literature, and in this respect, Jan Mahomed rightly observes that "Achebe wishes the African writer to undertake the awesome task of alleviating the problems of historical petrification and catalepsy"; furthermore, he perceptively points to the availability of Georg Lukacs's theory of realism. He adds that "typical" is the conceptual term which Lukacs depends on when defining his aesthetics credo.

Soyinka builds his theory of drama with material from his Yoruba tradition: rituals, rites, ceremonies, festivals, etc. This fact justifies in his plays, the use of metanarratives that imaginatively and discursively legitimated the movement of the twentieth century. Those metanarratives do not feature in his works in their conventional and familiar configurations. As Ulli Beier states in his *Introduction to African Literature*,

²² Christiane Fioupou, *La Route: réalité et représentation dans l' oeuvre de Wole Soyinka* (Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi B.V., 1994), p. fourth cover.

²³ Georg Lukács, 'Realism in the Balance' in *Aesthetics and Politics*, edited by Ernst Bloch et al., afterword by Frederic Jameson. London: NLB, 1977, p. 28.

²⁴ Ernest N. Emenyonu and Iniobong I. Uko (ed.), *Emerging Perspectives on Chinua Achebe, Volume 2, ISINKA, the Artistic Purpose: Chinua Achebe and the Theory of African Literature* (Treton: Africa World Press, Inc. 2004), p. 49.

There is no conventional theatre in Yoruba tradition. The dramatic re – enactments of historical events, which often form part of religious festivals, involve acting but they are not meant as entertainment, nor have they produced a professional class of actors²⁵.

The above quotation by Ulli Beier states a general view on African drama. He means that, in Africa, there are no clearly set criteria for drama so as to have a conventional theatre. What is true for the Yoruba community is also true for other African communities. Apart from this religious theatre, it does exist saynette which describes everyday life in portraying the most important people of the community particularly making fun of them.

In the development of modern African drama, the survival of some features of traditional African drama will be early noticed. This fact however does not prevent this literary genre in general from meeting the universal criteria of drama. Referring to how these plays have been produced Martin Esslin states:

of focus, of viewpoint, to submit them like organisms in a laboratory, to a survival test in vacuo by seeing how they appear to someone who, in the course of this professional work has to read an endless succession of plays from totally different backgrounds and who will therefore, almost automatically, apply to them the same general yardstick; who will judge them not as African plays but as plays pure and simple²⁶.

Since drama deals with human emotions and education through the interaction of characters, their feelings are expressed through social conventions set up by individual communities. This fact implies as Martin Esslin adds that, in order to reach truly universal acceptance a play must fulfil both conditions – it must have a subject – matter that is accessible to the maximum number of different societies; and it must be an example of supreme craftsmanship in construction and language.²⁷

Through this analysis, we will attempt to investigate the aesthetic features of Wole Soyinka's plays particularly *A Dance of the Forests*, *The Swamp Dwellers*, *The Strong Breed*, *The Road*, *The Lion and the Jewel*, *Kongi's Harvest* and *The Trials of Brother Jero*.

²⁵ Ulli Beier (ed), *Introduction to African Literature (New edition): An Anthology of Critical Writing* (London: Longman, 1979), p. 269.

²⁶ Ulli Beier (ed), op. cit. p. 281.

²⁷ Ibid., p.282.

As clear as it may appear, this study aims at getting Wole Soyinka's aesthetic features widely known since they are useful for calling both, leaders, be them traditional or modern, and ordinary peoples to give their countries and continents the chances they deserve in the domains of politics, society, culture, education, economics, environment, religion, etc.

This implies a re-evaluation of the sociological context and of the other material imperatives of culture in the historical development of the country from the beginning to the present. Every writer exists within a society and as a member of such society, he preoccupies himself with issues that arise within it.

This study is placed in the field of African Literature. Nigerian drama is a harvest of traditions. It has evolved from the communal pool of myths, folktales and legends of the people and, on the other hand, the western tradition of playwriting imbibed from western culture and civilisation. During our DEA seminars we had a chance to study contemporary African drama, and we learned that the three major tendencies were generally divided into different categories, namely: - the Euromodernists who have aped the practices of the twentieth century European modernist theatre. This first category includes Wole Soyinka, J.P. Clark and the early Christopher Okigbo. They are the Traditionalists who have tried to model the English language drama on elements from traditional African theatre. The writers whose works feature the second group are: Mazizi Kunene, Kofi Awoonor; Okot P' Bitek and the late Okigbo²⁸. There is a miscellany of individual voices of the middle ground who, unlike the Euromodernists or the traditionalists, share no strongly distinguishing characteristic.

Wole Soyinka association with the Euromodernists may also be present among the traditionalists because he does not fold up on his own position of Africinity or authenticity. He also thinks that truth is not in the African past; it is not in the African heritage, and he is happy to write in English²⁹.

The uniqueness of Wole Soyinka's plays that constitute the corpus of my dissertation has motivated me to do this work. His works "demonstrated his development from simple village comedies to a more complex and individual drama

²⁸ Alain Ricard, *Wole Soyinka ou l'Ambition Démocratique* (Paris: Silex, 1988), p. 71.

²⁹ Alain Ricard, op. cit., p. 54.

incorporating mime and dance”³⁰. His plays, ranging from comedy to tragedy, and from political satire to the theatre of the absurd, unfold one after another, involving religion, traditionalism, myth, politics, education, economics, and social taboos. What draws attention is that he combines “tribal myths and traditions while employing Western forms and used the devices of flashback, symbolism, and clever plot structure to enrich his dramatic style.”³¹ In addition, Soyinka’s perspectives on the deepening crisis of state, society, and culture in postcolonial Africa, through radical and avantgarde, are located at a putatively “free” and independent junctures between, on the one hand, the official ideologies of the new ruling regimes of the continent and, on the other hand, the radical – populist ideologies of progressive opposition parties and trade union – led social and political movements. He does this through the use of Yoruba and other African sources while he keeps track of the wealth of his Western and non-African elective affinities in his work.

The struggle for self-representation as the existential and expressive roots of human freedom is a remarkable feature of Wole Soyinka’s plays under consideration. This fact distinguishes his works from those of his fellow African writers such as Chinua Achebe and Ngugi wa Thiong’o. This fact is an aspect of Wole Soyinka’s aesthetics. We have therefore to study some of his works; the choice of Wole Soyinka, and the selection of his plays are subject to some specific aspects mentioned above, which bring out for the ideas that those plays under consideration are rooted in the Yoruba culture and theatre of Nigeria, they bear marks of Western drama, and they also deal with universal issues and phenomenon. Wole Soyinka is the most prolific and Africa’s best known dramatist and one of its most illustrious personalities. He is the first black African writer who won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1986. He deserves special consideration for making the efforts to revive the Nigerian Theatre.

Soyinka was brought up as a relatively privileged Nigerian of Yoruba culture, raised partially Christian and given a Western education. Though indebted to Western

³⁰ Dinah Birch, *Oxford Companion to English Literature*, 7th Edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 938.

³¹ Bernth Lindfors, “The Early Writings of Wole Soyinka,” in *Critical Perspectives on Wole Soyinka*, edited by James Gibbs (Washington DC: An Original by Three Continents Press, Inc., 1980), p. 19.

literary figures such as Nietzsche, Bertold Brecht³², G. Wilson Knight, he was also influenced by Franz Fanon, Kwame Nkrumah, Amical Cabrar, Julius Nyerere, and was familiar with the writings of anarchist thinkers like Pierre Proudhon, Tolstoy, Gandhi, Albert Camus and Ignazio Silone. But his philosophical roots are deeply embedded in African and more specifically Yoruba mythology and culture³³. The preponderant influence is that of Brecht's writing in a series of boards, mixture of songs and dialogues, addresses to the public, etc.

Here again, the seven plays have been selected mainly because, through their aesthetics and their functions, they are likely linked by their concern with spiritual and the social, with belief and spiritual as integrating forces for social cohesion. They also trace the ironic development and consequences of progress. These plays raise the issue of aesthetics which addresses all aspects of human life. To this effect aesthetics is associated with aesthetic frames and dramatic forms: politics and aesthetics, social and political issues, theatricality: plot, dramatic structures and effects, dance, music, mime, songs and body actions; language variations, intertextual variations, proverbs and performance.

2-Review of Related Literature and Problematics.

After I have resorted to sources, both primary and secondary, I come to start with review of literature which justifies the choice of this topic, and brings me insight into the statement of my thesis. I find it also important to begin by the presentation, the classification, and the evaluation of what other researchers have written on the particular subject of aesthetics in literature which could be perceived as synonymous to framing. This will help define and limit this problem as well as place it in a historical perspective. In addition, this part of the study also works in such a way as to compare and contrast different authors' views on literary aesthetic features, group those who

³² Alain Ricard, 'Les paradoxes de Wole Soyinka' in *Revue Présence Africaine*, 72, (Paris: Présence Africaine, 1970), p. 103.

³³ Information on Soyinka's influences come mainly from Florence Stratton, 'Wole Soyinka's social vision', *Black American Literature Forum*, vol. 22 ; number 3 (Fall 1988): 534. Also, see : Joseph Wilson, 'Soyinka and philosophic traditions : European and African,' (<http://www.emory.edu/ENGLISH/Bahri/soyinka.html> (March 2015)).

draw similar conclusions, note areas in which they are in disagreement, show how this study relates to literature in general, and concludes by summarizing what literature says.

Author of about twenty plays, two novels, poems and other works, Soyinka is considered nowadays as one of the pillars of African literature. Experts in literature appreciate him not for the quantity of his works but for their quality, in a word, for his artistry. Scholars have produced articles, books, theses and dissertations on his literary works.

In Spain, especially at the Universidad de Oviedo, Maria Amparo González Rúa produced a dissertation entitled *Las raíces culturales del teatro antropológico de Wole Soyinka: estudio de **Death and the King's Horseman***³⁴. She explores the different elements that constitute the aesthetics, rituals, symbols and world of ideas of Nigerian culture. The study focuses on one of its most representative plays, investigating their views on relations between myth, history and modernity, emphasizing his conception of the nature of the post-colonial Nigerian society. At the same time, she examines the cultural aspects of the demonic, death, political violence. The author studies the beliefs of Wole Soyinka as to irremediable desire to transcend that human beings possess, especially in a context of social and political oppressions.

Though Gonzalez Rua's dissertation helps understand Wole Soyinka's message, it shows its limits to the extents that other features such as songs, music, dance, gestures have not been examined. Above all, this work is devoted to the study of one play only, *The Death of the King's Horseman* alone.

In France, at the Université de Dijon, Jean Bernard Lissossi's *Tradition and Modernity in Wole Soyinka's Work*³⁵, Anzah's *Fictional Configuration in the Novels of Wole Soyinka and Tchicaya Utam'si*³⁶, and Chonsi Lunga's *A Critical Analysis of Wole Soyinka as a Dramatist, with Special Reference to his Engagement in*

³⁴M. Amparo González Rúa, *Las raíces culturales del teatro antropológico de Wole Soyinka: estudio de **Death and the King's Horseman***, Dissertation, (Universidad de Oviedo: 2004). <http://hdl.handle.net/10651/13736>

³⁵Jean Bernard Lissossi, *Tradition and Modernity in Wole Soyinka's Work*, Dissertation, (France: 1989). <http://www.sudoc.fr/041362098>

³⁶Nehemiah M. Anzah, *Fictional Configuration in the Novels of Wole Soyinka and Tchicaya Utam'si*, Dissertation, (France, 1999). <http://www.sudoc.fr/048234087>.

*Contemporary Issues*³⁷ draw similar conclusions on the functions of Wole Soyinka's literary works they have investigated. They respectively write that, with Wole Soyinka African literature has transformed from the heuristic sphere to that of praxis; and Wole Soyinka adopts Amuta's approach which is opposed to art for art sake. This means that Wole Soyinka's commitment leads him to denounce all forms of oppressions.

The dissertation *Comique et tragique: la dramaturgie de Wole Soyinka à l'épreuve d'une problématique théâtrale africaine*³⁸ defended by Dia Makhmouth Université de Caen Normandie is a study of the comic and the tragic in the *theatrical* works of Wole Soyinka. It analyses, on one hand, the depiction and the dramaturgical relations between the comic and the tragic in his drama and, on the other hand, it relates them to the sociological and ideological context of modern Africa. According to critics, the association of the tragic and the comic is one of the most important pillars of contemporary African drama. The Nigerian dramatist has proposed an African tragedy based on Yoruba cosmogony, rituals and metaphysics. However, as it is usually the case with propositions of African tragedy, Soyinka has underestimated the comic in the process. Although it is less researched area, it is known that African audiences laugh during representations of tragedies. It is also said that laughter and festivity are part of daily life, including during its tragic moments.

The traditional rite, beliefs, myths and Yoruba legends are the foundations of Wole Soyinka's drama. El Hafi in his dissertation *Le rituel: changement et vision sociale dans l'oeuvre dramatique de Wole Soyinka*³⁹ demonstrates that the god Ogun is the first actor and the first winner of the transition. He also addresses the aspirations of the individual, incorporating the collective dimension, which is the anchor of the Soyinka's tragedy. In addition, the sacrifice of the mechanism is thus considered by exploring rites of transition, purification and communion. The author finds that, ritual theater plays an important role in achieving social cohesion. He then analyzes the phenomena that allow to highlight the interest of the Yoruba community theater.

³⁷ Majahana John Chonsi Lunga, *A Critical Analysis of Wole Soyinka as a Dramatist, with Special Reference to his Engagement in Contemporary Issues*, Dissertation, (South Africa: University of South Africa November, 1994).

http://uir.unisa.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10500/17262/dissertation_lunga_mj.pdf?sequence=1

³⁸ Makhmouth Dia, *Comique et tragique: la dramaturgie de Wole Soyinka à l'épreuve d'une problématique théâtrale africaine*, Dissertation, (Université de Caen Normandie: 1999).

<http://www.sudoc.fr/143808753>

³⁹ Fethia El Hafi, *Le rituel: changement et vision sociale dans l'oeuvre dramatique de Wole Soyinka* (France: 1999). <http://www.sudoc.fr/060032987>

Ngor Sene in his dissertation *Mythe et rituel dans la production théâtrale de Wole Soyinka ou la matrice d'une conscience sociale toujours en éveil*⁴⁰ considers Wole Soyinka as a committed writer who is fully aware of the lyrical power of his art. It is by its very nature a medium for change. Theater properly responds to the changing pattern of events and to the dynamics of any situation and Wole Soyinka's drama can be seen as the womb of a never-fading social consciousness. He is deeply rooted in the cosmogony and aesthetics of his people, the Yoruba and also a true disciple of Ogun, the first deity to dare the gulf of transition between the realm of gods and humanity. Soyinka's drama not only aims at the comprehensive world of myth, repetitive history but it also suggests some ways of conquering the effective power of the individual in the actual tragic context of modern Africa social issues. The African artist's mythopoesis calls us to immerse thoroughly within the whirlpool of cosmic forces, understand their nature, rescue the combative nature of the will and emerge wiser.

*Mythologizing the Transition: A Comparative Study of Bahram Beyzaee and Wole Soyinka*⁴¹, a dissertation by Talajooy examines the major themes and dramatic techniques of these two writers to demonstrate how, in two very different cultural settings, traditional modes and themes appear in modern art forms to renegotiate cultural identity. A part of this study is focused on Soyinka's depiction of the intellectuals as sacrificial heroes whose death may initiate social purgation and cultural regeneration and liberation. It is a reflection on the writers' portrayal of women in his works and his success or failure in transcending literary and cultural stereotypes in a world where the means of production and socio-economic facts and the cultural developments associated with them demand a rapid movement away from patriarchal values. It is devoted to the study of another major issue in the process of cultural transition, namely, redefining the position of ethnic minorities in the myth of nationhood.

Soyinka places his protagonists in a world where one can easily be overcome by rapid materialism, corruption and hypocritical relationships. It is also within this world that his protagonists detect and choose to confront the evil around them. Soyinka's

⁴⁰ Jean-Jacques Ngor Sene, *Mythe et rituel dans la production théâtrale de Wole Soyinka ou la matrice d'une conscience sociale toujours en éveil*, Dissertation, (Université Rennes 2, 1999). <http://www.sudoc.fr/060268549>

⁴¹ Saeed Reza Talajooy, *Mythologizing the Transition: A Comparative Study of Bahram Beyzaee and Wole Soyinka*, Dissertation, (Leeds: University of Leeds, 2008). http://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk/406/1/uk_bl_ethos_489846.pdf

protagonists reject the roles given to them by the stereotyping gaze of their communities and aspire to find roles, which also expand the horizons of this communal gaze by making their people conscious of their shortcomings. The author embarks on this study when Soyinka's reflections in *The Strong Breed* captured his attention. Projecting a post postcolonial consciousness, he displays an understanding of the need to transcend the gaze of the west. He is mostly concerned with revealing and confronting those individual or cultural practices or beliefs that rendered his culture susceptible to opportunist colonialists or dictators. He also utilizes his knowledge of Yoruba mythology to produce mythologized relations that make his works penetrating and profound and display his world with indigenous signposts that explains modern problems without recurrent reference to various western philosophical and ideological systems. Soyinka writes in English in an attempt to address a national and an international audience.

Soyinka's depiction of women reveals that his women and children remain stereotypical, shallow and marginal or else symbolic and inflated. Soyinka, in different stages of his careers, reflects a tendency to criticize and satirize the negative attributes of common people without providing constructive models of citizenship. There are, for instance, to the author's knowledge, no studies of Soyinka's treatments of ethnic minorities in their works or their attitudes towards the subjects revolving around the concept of nationalism. And there are only limited references to their tragic visions as being primarily concerned with depicting creative intellectuals as sacrificial heroes. The field, of course, is open for future full-length studies of Soyinka's female characters or their treatments of ethnic minorities in their works.

Talajooy understanding of Wole Soyinka's depiction of women is limited to the plays he examines. Wole Soyinka's dramatic works deal with the question of genre which could be interpreted in manners that show other aspects.

In his dissertation *Politics and Poetics in the Drama of Salah 'Abd al-Sabur and Wole Soyinka*⁴², Shalaby locates the works of Soyinka with respect to postcolonial drama. This dramatist has written plays which belong to the realm of postcolonial discourse in the sense that these plays reflect a tendency to resist the coloniser's cultural hegemony and its repercussions. A coloniser's domination does not end with

⁴²Mahmoud Shalaby, *Politics and Poetics in the Drama of Salah 'Abd al-Sabur and Wole Soyinka*, (Edinburgh: The University of Edinburgh, 2013). <https://www.era.lib.ed.ac.uk/handle/1842/7788>.

departure from colonised space, a trace is left behind which affects the collective memory of society. The aim is to throw light on this concern and explore the manner in which it was expressed from a postcolonial perspective. Issues such as language, national identity, ideology, and political protest form a central concern of his dramatic output. One of the most potent instruments that could be utilised to create a chasm in the structure of any cultural entity is language. This is the entrance through which colonizing powers aspiring for cultural hegemony delve into the culture of the colonised. Language was the means of spiritual subjugation. The question of language is central to postcolonial discourse and has been a constant concern for writers of all genres, particularly dramatists, from different cultures. One of the remarkable plays of the Irish dramatist Brian Friel deals extensively with language as a major factor of domination. Sacred books of religion give varied examples of how powerful language could be. The one that clearly illustrates this is found in *The Bible*. Creating the world started with: “In the beginning was the Word ” (John 1 VI).

The imperial enterprise took European languages as signposts for dividing Africa among the colonial powers. Soyinka emphasizes the pivot role language plays in shaping people’s consciousness. Soyinka tends to present the various aspects of faith that could be found in any religion. This is done in a context that defines itself dramatically rather than ideologically, showing the interaction between different religions, and using rich religious material as a main ingredient in their drama. After independence, African writers needed new forms to not just represent the new stage of history but also to undermine the stereotypical Victorian and early modern European image of their cultures⁴³. The study demonstrates that the playwright, adopting the aesthetics of modernism, attempted to produce through experimental drama a fresh image of the newly independent state. He finds in modernism the critical tools that enabled him to revolt against the inherited image of a glorious past and to resist patterns of delusory thought.

The author shows that Soyinka presents in his plays a critique of history and the past. The term tradition covers myths, legends, tales, rituals, epic, folk poetry, cultic chants, incantations, dirges, songs, dancing drumming, proverbs, riddles, etc. Again, in this wide array of genres the spoken word forms the nerve centre. In fact, using these

⁴³ Ibid., n.p. <https://www.era.lib.ed.ac.uk/handle/1842/7788>.

devices in modern African drama is not new and playwrights in the Yoruba language had profusely used them. However, integrating them to the African English-language Theater is a modern phenomenon that is primarily credited to Soyinka. He takes myth as a rich source to draw upon and Yoruba mythology represents the backbone for the structure of many of his plays. Soyinka mocks the superficial use of language by natives who try to comprehensively imitate Western culture and regard it as superior to their own.

As for intellectuals, the playwright could not ignore the problems that face these persons in their societies. He reflects on the role of the intellectuals and the role which is supposed to be performed by such a public figure. As the thesis demonstrates, Soyinka's genuine intellectuals are closely modeled on the ritual figure of Ogun, but the false ones are characters which Soyinka ridicules in a caustic satirical tone. Soyinka's intellectuals are not essentially poets or writers, though they speak a poetic language. The atmosphere which surrounds Soyinka's intellectuals is mostly ritual in nature and the village is the arena of their struggle to keep a balance between tradition and modernity. His plays will remain as a constant reminder of the incessant effort of African writers to produce avant-garde theatre pieces worthy of continuous review and inviting reinterpretation. Shalaby's dissertation does not deal with the different language variations, the categories of songs and dance, the typologies of proverbs Wole Soyinka integrates in his plays. Though, the dissertation provides a sound definition of the term tradition.

In his dissertation *Soyinka's Language*⁴⁴, Ofoego approaches a number of Wole Soyinka's dramatic and prose works in English. Throughout, it is concerned with his intelligence as expressed through literature. Words penetrate us, undermine our attempts to stand apart, draw us into a realm of consequence (*The Lion and the Jewel*, *The Jero Plays*). Consequence, in turn, implies passage between two distinct moments, inviting us to reflect on how language can become strange (*The Road*, *Madmen and Specialists*). What happens to words in one who is content to look on from a distance, instead of participating? This is the starting point for a discussion of Soyinka's interrogations of justice in *The Strong Breed*, *A Dance of the Forests*, *The Bacchae of Euripides* and *The Burden of Memory*. Implicit in onlooking is the risk of self-

⁴⁴ Obioma Ofoego, *Soyinka's Language*, Dissertation, (Toulouse: Université Toulouse-Jean Jaurès, 2014). <http://www.sudoc.fr/189667478>

sufficiency. Warded off in the prose of *The Man Died*, self-sufficiency provides a foil to a Yoruba conception of being and tragedy, as articulated in *Myth, Literature and the African World*. The study culminates in *Death and the King's Horseman*, which best enacts the tension between self-assertion and commonality, departure and return, being and non-being, in and through poetic language.

Kafilat's M.A Thesis *Politics and Aesthetics in Selected Plays of Wole Soyinka*⁴⁵ has been embarked upon to present the politics and aesthetics in selected plays of Wole Soyinka paying much attention to his *The Beatification of Area Boy* and *Kongi's Harvest*. The study has been able to extract and discuss the ways in which Wole Soyinka applied cultural artifacts to political issues to depict the happenings in his immediate society. The study has conclusively pointed to the fact that the society can only be changed positively if everyone is ready to make huge sacrifices to realize positive changes. The aesthetic devices Kafilat locates in Wole Soyinka's selected plays and the political facts he explores meet our expectations. They are allusions; songs; Ogun mythology; imagery; political setting; the politics of intimidation; oppression and torture. But, the author misses the point in the field of analysis of some of the devices. Key terms such as Biblical allusions; historical allusion are not used. The three songs used as illustrations are not categorized and their messages are not given by the thesis author. Above all this study focusses only on *The Beatification of Area Boy* and *Kongi's Harvest*.

To begin with the problematics, I will ask the following questions: What are the aesthetic features in Wole Soyinka's plays under consideration? And what are their specific functions?

The followings are the tested hypotheses we will verify in this research on the point of view of epistemology with a particular emphasis on the 'how question'. The use of aesthetic frames, dramatic forms and structures, language variations, citations, allusions, references, dance, music, songs, and proverbs could reveal Wole Soyinka's major preoccupations, his vision for Africa and the world. Ritual, rites, ceremonies, and festivals might help in the creation of Wole Soyinka's dramatic theory. Soyinka's plays might be successful with the dialectic of past, present and future, and of the

⁴⁵ Shittu Temitope Kafilat, *Politics and Aesthetics in Selected Plays of Wole Soyinka*, M.A. Thesis, (Ilorin: University of Ilorin: 2011), n.p.
<https://myproject.com.ng/index.php/product/politics-aesthetics-selected-plays-wole-soyinka/>

known and the unknown, and of human beings and supernaturals. The African past is unglorious in the plays. Wole Soyinka's aesthetics could frame the ideal of religious tolerance between Christianity and Muslim. This could also be part of his universality when we know that, in some countries and continents, Catholics and Protestants, and other religions opposed in belief and ethics do not accept each other. Wole Soyinka frames issues of gender. It could be revealed in the plays that equality of sex, gender leads to the integral development of the humankind. Corruption might be framed in Wole Soyinka's plays. This fact could have a universal dimension. Cultural authenticity involves recovering tradition and inserting it in postcolonial modernity. This could facilitate transformative moral and political justice. The rich influence of indigenous African languages might be the nature and characteristics of Wole Soyinka's plays. The dramatization of language could pass through the use of variations such as pidgin English, simplified English, code switching and code mixing in Wole Soyinka's plays.

3-Research Methodology, Scope and Limitation.

As a first step in the methodology account, I shall outline a theory which I shall call the theory of consecutiveness: supervenience-theory; it accounts for aesthetic features by construing them as supervenient on textual features. An aesthetic feature, the theory says, is identified by a reader, in a literary work, through an aesthetic judgement as what one may call a constellation of textual features. A constellation of textual features constitutes an aesthetic feature of a particular work⁴⁶.

The need for assuming the existence of aesthetic sensibility arises in the supervenience-theory because it wants to avoid reducing aesthetic features to textual features. It does this by postulating that the single reader possesses an aesthetic sensibility enabling him to recognize the aesthetic features of the work. As far as the question relating to aspects of the aesthetics inherent to Soyinka's plays under scrutiny is concerned, I would like to consider these aesthetic features of different kinds, and try to investigate the extent to which they are valuable.

The investigation of a literary work can be achieved only with the help of

⁴⁶ Stein Haugom Olsen, *The End of Literary Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p. 3.

complementary sciences such as sociology, psychology, anthropology, linguistics. Literary approaches which provide me with a standard to measure my opinions of Soyinka's selected plays, and give me insight into those works are: the anthropological, moral, sociological, psychological and the linguistic approaches⁴⁷, the historical and biographical approach, the mythic approach. The methodology books we refer to are *Five Approaches of Literary Criticism* by Wilber Scott and *Analyses Stylistiques* by Yve Lehir.

To begin with the anthropological approach, it deals with the study of human belief, customs, rites⁴⁸, etc. This approach is helpful for the understanding of Yoruba tradition from which Soyinka traced its roots.

Thanks to this approach, I can grasp the Yoruba writer's interpretation of certain traditional issues such as the organic restoration.

As far as the sociological approach is concerned, it defines social relationships⁴⁹. They are vitally important, and that the investigation of these relationships may organize and deepen one's aesthetic response to a work of art. It is not created in a vacuum; it is the work not simply of one person, but of an author fixed in time and place, responding to a community of which he is an important and articulate part. Therefore, the sociological approach is interested in understanding the social milieu and the extent to which, and manner in which the artist responds to it.

As for the psychological approach, its application to art provides a more precise language with which to discuss the creative process. A second application goes back to the study of the author's life as a means of understanding his art. Thirdly, this approach can be used to explain fictitious characters⁵⁰; the linguistic approach which is concerned with what the text tells us about the language of the time of the work; the

⁴⁷ Yve Lehir, *Analyses Stylistiques* (Paris: librairie Armand colin, 1965), p.7.

⁴⁸ A.S., Hornby, *The Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* (London: Oxford University Press, 1963).

⁴⁹ Wilber Scott, *Five Approaches of Literary Criticism* (London: Macmillan), p. 23.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 72.

historical approach⁵¹ which is concerned with the relationship of the work to history, the impact of the work on history and the importance of historical knowledge in the understanding of a work, how history and literature inform and affect each other; the biographical approach which is interested in the relationship of the writer's life to his work; the mythic approach which deals with the universal patterns of human behavior and thinking as conveyed in literature.

This dissertation is carried out with the aid of many approaches because aesthetics addresses all the aspects of human life, and literature itself is aesthetic to the extent that fiction integrates real life. At this level, we evoke again the relation between literature and aesthetics, a useful repetition might not be avoid. In fact, what we mean by the literary aesthetic features in Wole Soyinka's plays under investigation results from our reading and proofreading of those works thanks to our own literary sensibility and critical literary tools. To this effect, we read the plays through the above mentioned supervenience-theory as it enables me to recognize the aesthetic features of the works.

The main structure of this dissertation includes an introduction, four chapters, a conclusion, a select bibliography, two indexes, eight annexes, an abstract in Spanish and an abstract in English.

The introduction addresses the issue of Wole Soyinka's literary identity markers drawn from both Yoruba and Western cultures, and their specific functions.

The first chapter therefore examines the aesthetic frames integrating the essence or nature of literature as an art, and the dramatic forms referring to the different literary subgenres Wole Soyinka has used to frame meanings. This chapter is divided into four sections which respectively deal with the influence of European political theatre, frame and social theory, politics and aesthetics, and framing social and political issues.

The second chapter is entitled language and intertextuality. It splits into languages variations and intertextual variations.

The third chapter deals with theatricality shifting dramatic forms. It is subdivided into plots and theatrical structures, reading through theatrical plots and flashbacks, reading through dramatic structures, and dramatic effects.

⁵¹ Charles Busha and Stephen P. Harter, *Research Methods in Librarianship: Techniques and Interpretations*, (Academic Press: New York, NY, 1980), pp. 99-100.

The last chapter is devoted to theatricality, proverbs and performance. It splits into proverbs in the context of performance, proverbs at the levels of semantics and pragmatics, and playing with proverbs.

I conclude my dissertation with the attempt to assess the identification of Wole Soyinka's aesthetic features, and their specific functions in his selected plays.

This dissertation is indeed a research work which could not be written without the information obtained from the select bibliography placed at the end. In this section, are listed all the relevant reading materials referred to in the text and notes as well. All the items read are arranged in alphabetical order. And we separate articles from books.

The annexes are made up of all lists of elements internal and external to the dissertation to which readers refer if necessary for a question of detail.

For the sake of those who will be reading my dissertation, I have planned to add an index to it in order to facilitate search of authors and books titles within the printed version.

Last but not least, we have the abstracts in Spanish and in English.

CHAPTER I

AESTHETIC FRAMES AND DRAMATIC FORMS

The wording of this chapter is meaningful. It is made up of two important noun phrases which help understanding what it is all about. Those noun phrases are: aesthetic frames and dramatic forms. These two noun phrases again, work in such way as to give a signifying, reflected, and collocative meaning on their relationship. What we think and see is within and behind aesthetic frames and dramatic forms integrate the essence or nature of literature as an art, that is to say, the creation and re-creation of meaning, true meaning or reality from the process of observation and imagination. What we have just written is linked to the first noun phrase, we mean, aesthetic frames. As for the second noun phrase, that is dramatic forms, they are synonymous with aesthetic categories. In this regards, dramatic forms or aesthetic categories refer to the different literary subgenres the writers use to frame their meaning. Dramatic forms include the following traditional aesthetic categories: comedy, tragedy, tragi-comedy, satire, lyric, epic, dramatic, etc.

The dramatic form known as tragedy includes Soyinka's major works such as *A Dance of the Forests*, *The Road* and *The Strong Breed*. *A Dance of The Forests* is a play modeled on the theory of tragedy. In fact, Demoke the carver in wood kills his apprentice out of envy by pulling him down from the araba tree. In his former existence as Court poet to Mata Kharibu he tacitly supported bloodshed by not speaking against the waging of a senseless war. As for Adenebi, in his prior existence, eight hundred years ago, he was the Court Historian to Mata Kharibu, and he argues that "War is the only consistency that past ages afford us", thereby facilitating the death of many soldiers in a "senseless war" that he encouraged; and at present he is the corrupt Council Orator responsible for the death of sixty five passengers on a lorry he had licensed to carry passengers beyond its stipulated capacity. Madam Tortoise in her previous world was a whore, and Mata Kharibu's wife responsible for the death of Dead Man and Dead Woman. She is in fact likened to Helen of Troy since it is her prostitution that caused the war, which Adenebi was is Kharibu's Court Historian described as "divine carnage". And in her present world, she is still a prostitute responsible for the demise of her two lovers.

Verse tragedy is the dramatic form applied to *The Swamp Dwellers*. This play depicts the manipulation of a community of poor, superstitious swamp farmers by greedy religious leaders. *The Swamp Dwellers* explores the theme of man's misfortune

set against hostile nature – physical and human. Tragedy is also seen in *The Strong Breed* that ends with an individual sacrifice for the sake of the communal benefit. The play is centered on the tradition of egungun, a Yoruba festival tradition in which a scapegoat of the village carries out the evil of the community and is exiled from the civilization. Eman, the play's protagonist, takes on the role of "carrier", knowing it will result in beating and exile. His pursuers set a trap for him that results in his death. Eman, the protagonist of *The Strong Breed* dies for the renewal of society. Eman is the archetypal image of the scapegoat. Wole Soyinka shows the universality of this image. Eman is the Christ-like figure dying for others. The death of Professor in *The Road* brings a bit of hope for the beginning of a new start in a society as he is the major character in the play. *The Road*, on the other hand, maintains a comic atmosphere through most of its scenes but ends on a tragic note. *The Road* is a kind of fantasy in which the inner questionings and obsessions of the playwright are exteriorized and interwoven with elements of reality in a dramatic condensation' of multiple levels of action and symbols. The play reveals to us a society that has been impacted with immorality and a society that has lost hope in its administration and thus Wole Soyinka satirized the Professor in his quest to find the "word".

Tragic consequences of an inordinate lust for power and supremacy are depicted in *Kongi's Harvest* centered on the tragic hero of Kongi and the excesses of his Aweri Fraternity, one of the three powerful forces in society. In fact, on the day of harvest, Kongi reneged on his promise as Segi's father who earlier escaped from detention was murdered. The tragedy sparked off revenge from Segi who abandoned her initial plans with Daodu to dance for Kongi. She went ahead to present Kongi with the decapitated head of an old man instead of the yam he wanted.

Furthermore, comedy, especially richly ribald comedy is the dramatic form of *The Lion and the Jewel*. The play combines poetry and prose with a marvellous lightness in the treatment of both. The plot revolves around Sidi, the village beauty, and the rivalry between her two suitors. Baroka is the village chief, an old man with many wives; Lakunle is the enthusiastically Westernized schoolteacher who dreams of molding Sidi into a civilized woman.

The light satiric comedy is *The Trials of Brother Jero*. This play deals with religious hypocrisy of a charlatan named Brother Jero. He preaches to his followers on Bar Beach in Lagos, Nigeria. Jero is a master of manipulation and keeps his followers in a subservient position because he understands that they long for money, social status, and power. He convinces them that they will soon be able to fulfill these materialistic desires. The play combines elements of satiric comedy and farce.

The concepts ‘‘aesthetic frames’’ and ‘‘dramatic forms’’ are essential and functioning principles through which literature is. They are part of the how literature creates and re-creates reality, and the functions and values of this creation and re-creation.

The analysis and comment will be made on the way Wole Soyinka, through his plays, in different categories, frames political issues. In this respect, to the first concepts of ‘‘aesthetic frames’’ and ‘‘dramatic forms’’, we add two others: ‘‘aesthetics and politics’’ and ‘‘framing political issues’’.

We find that all these concepts are not very common. That is why we are going to elaborate more on them so that we shed more light, and be able to gain a better understanding of these concepts. More light will come from the historical background of ‘‘aesthetics and politics’’, ‘‘aesthetics and other sciences’’, ‘‘aesthetics, realism, romanticism, Marxism, and post-structuralism’’ and ‘‘framing’’.

To begin with, we find it very important to remind that our main concern in this first chapter of our dissertation on the aesthetic features on Wole Soyinka is to identify and locate, through reading, Wole Soyinka’s political commitment and activism in his plays. We mean, we are going to interpret the plays in the perspective of finding out, both the different ways the author makes his political perceptions through dramatic categories, and the perceptions themselves. By the word perceptions, we mean issues, and in a more precise way in accordance with the context of this chapter, political issues. This chapter splits into four sections: the influence of European political theatre on Wole Soyinka, frames and social theory, politics and aesthetics, framing political and social issues.

I-1- INFLUENCE OF EUROPEAN POLITICAL THEATRE.

The approach we use requires fundamentals such as the European sources of Wole Soyinka's political activism through his plays. We may also speak in terms of influence or inspiration even if Soyinka's himself refuses to have been inspired by any single other writer. Let us write and consider only the contributions on Soyinka's favorites in the making, shaping of literary talent. Wole Soyinka accepts that he has his favorites. They are: Shakespeare, Charles Dickens, Tolstoy, Tony Morrison, etc. This may also mean that Soyinka shares his favorite's literary doctrines in one way or another. Wole Soyinka considers Shakespeare as everybody's all-time favorite. This may also mean, Shakespeare's works influence him, and other future writers in every genre, including love stories, melodrama, adventure, comedy, fairy tales, and tragedies. Wole Soyinka talks about 'Shakespeare and the Living Dramatist'. Soyinka is an artist who works in several traditions and who has defined himself in relation to those traditions. He came under the influence of the brilliant Shakespeare scholar, G. Wilson Knight.

In a note, we find it important to elaborate a bit more on Wole Soyinka's refusal of being inspired or influenced by any single other writer, but he has his own favorites among them Shakespeare. In the context of this analysis, we do not see any difference between the facts of being inspired, influenced by other writer, and having one's own favorite. It is true that scholars stand on the shoulder of their predecessors. In this respect, research reveal that even Shakespeare himself, with the exception of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Love's Labour's Lost* and *The Tempest*, which are wholly original stories, borrowed his plots, down to fine detail. Our literary sensibility lets us consider the name Caliban, a character in *The Tempest* as a verbal allusion of the word 'canibal' which is equal in meaning with cannibalism. At this level we see the influence of Shakespeare on Soyinka who writes, 'unborn generatioons will be cannibals' (p. 49), 'men always eating up one another' (p. 50) in *A Dance of the Forests*, 'we are so hungry that when silly girls like you turn up, we eat them' (p. 137) in *The Strong Breed*, 'you cannot pretend to be an out-and out cannibal like Sergeant Burma' (p. 165) in *The Road*, 'you have picked yourself a right cannibal of the female species' (p. 104) in *Kongi's Harvest*. In addition, Shakespeare's opening

phrase of a dialogue in *Hamlet*, that is ‘to be or not to be’ might have inspired Wole Soyinka when he phrases his ‘cry or no cry’ (*The Strong Breed*, p. 137).

Shakespeare belongs to the Elizabethan literature which refers to the bodies of work produced during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I (1558 - 1603), and is considered to be one of the most splendid ages of English literature. William Shakespeare stands out in this period as a poet and playwright. Though most dramas met with great success, it is in his later years that he wrote what have been considered his greatest plays such as *The Tempest*. In these plays Shakespeare sets himself to grapple with the deepest and darkest problems of human character and life. Shakespeare did not solve the insoluble problems of life, but having presented them as powerfully, perhaps, as is possible for human intelligence, he turned in his last period, of only two or three years, to the expression of the serene philosophy of life in which he himself must have now taken refuge.

As for Shakespeare’s influence on other writers, Thomas Carlyle in his *The Hero as Poet* (1841) writes that, ‘Yes, this Shakespeare is ours; we produced him, we speak and think by him; we are of one blood and kind with him.’ The main idea conveyed in the statement above means that the influence of Shakespeare on other writers is tremendous.

Through his influence on Karl Marx, Shakespeare’s plays had a formative influence on the development of Marxism and the methodology of the Frankfurt School of Critical Theory. Marx quoted from or alluded to Shakespeare’s plays hundreds of times in their writings. Many of these instances occur at significant points in the development of Marxism. Marx used lines from *The Merchant of Venice* and *Timon of Athens* to develop his economic theory and his theory of consciousness. Two methods that developed out of the influence of Shakespeare on Marx – inversions and the re-inclusion of the other/a method of relating to alterity – became the methodology of the Frankfurt School of Critical Theory. The dialectic was the philosophical ground through which the influence travelled. In this manner, Shakespeare’s influence was at the roots of the Frankfurt School’s dialectical aesthetic theory.

Shakespeare’s aesthetic frame in *The Tempest* which might also have been used as a source of inspiration for Wole Soyinka, particularly in his *A Dance of the Forests*

and *The Lion and the Jewel* succeeded in framing the issue of colonialism. This fact is clear when this play is viewed through the lens of postcolonial theory, and comment on the plot, the setting and the characters.

Our reference to Shakespeare's play aims at providing an understanding of the historical and social contexts of the play. In fact, Christopher Columbus discovered America in 1492. In 1497, Henry VII commissioned John Cabot to sail west, and he became the first Englishman to set foot on American soil. Notice that so far there was no colonization, and new lands were discovered with the purpose of trade and getting natural resources. The island itself is depicted as a lush and fertile place with forest groves, waterfalls and abundant wild life. British colonization of America started in 1607, when Virginia Company set up a colony in the town of Jamestown, Virginia. Thus, when Shakespeare wrote *The Tempest* in 1611, colonization was fairly recent and in the public consciousness. *The Tempest* and the Colonial Discourse are more likely to be prophetic rather than descriptive, since colonization was not old enough yet for all its complexities and moral issues to be revealed. *The Tempest* plot is based in the Mediterranean, but the description of the island seems more reminiscent of the New World, which was being colonized when this play was written.

We will analyze *The Tempest* in detail, and interpret it as a play about colonialism because Prospero comes to Sycorax's island, subdues her, rules the land and imposes his own culture on the people of the land. Pushing the native to the side, he places himself at the helm of affairs. He displaces Caliban's mother and treats her as beast. He has full control over everything on the island. He makes Caliban work as his servant and calls him a thing of darkness. Caliban is being deshumanized or treated as subhuman. This shows the colonizer's attitude of looking down on the colonized people. The interpretation of *The Tempest* through the lens of postcolonialism views Prospero as a colonialist with racist overtones in his treatment of Caliban and Ariel, both of whom are subjugated by him, and desire freedom. Caliban is the son of Sycorax, and the original inhabitant of the island before Prospero's arrival. When *The Tempest* is seen through the postcolonial lens, he depicts the Native Americans, and Prospero the invading British. Caliban is seen to live at peace with nature on the island, like the Native Americans. He said:

And then I lov'd thee, and show'd thee all the qualities o' th' isle...be I that did so! ... For I am all the subjects that you have, which first was mine own king⁵².

Prospero sees Caliban as savage and uncivilized, thus feeling the need to convert him and civilize him. Caliban resents this however, since he was free and happy before Prospero arrived. Caliban attempts to rape Miranda, and is unrepentant of it. In relation to this Caliban said, "Would't had been done! Thou dost prevent me; I had peopled else this isle with Calibans⁵³".

He wishes to dominate what he sees are rightfully his own island. The colonizer Prospero sees it a threat to his own domination, hence subjugates him further. Language is another important tool for cultural domination often used by Colonizing nations, such as establishing English Universities in India, which would produce citizens faithful to the British crown – "Brown on the outside, white on the inside." Prospero is seen doing this as well. Caliban said: "You taught me language; And my profit on't is, I know how to Curse⁵⁴".

Colonial and postcolonial literature is often written in the Colonizer's language, though it is critical of colonization itself. Caliban seems to suggest this as well. In the play, Stephano and Trinculo pour wine down Caliban's throat and reduce him to a boot licking slave – getting them addicted to alcohol, and selling them guns to fight among each other was one of the ways the English subjugated the Native Americans. Caliban's protest against Prospero and his resistance to colonial power using the language taught by the colonizer helps us interpret the play as a postcolonial text. Prospero sees himself as a ruler carrying out the project of civilization mission. The civilizing mission is always accompanied by the politics of domination over colonized. These elements allow us to argue that the play is also actually about colonialism. Caliban is disobedient and creates problems for the colonizer. He attempts to rape Miranda and it is a threat posed to the safety of the colonizer. He tells Prospero that the land he rules was forcefully taken away from his mother. Caliban is not only an exploited victim but also a being of natural human descent that is capable of resisting to colonization by active and violent opposition.

⁵² William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, edited by Anne Richter (London: Penguin Books, 1968), p. 76.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, edited by Anne Richter, op. cit., p. 77.

Taking into account such reality, we are not surprised to read through Soyinka's plays traces and indications of those writers' using drama, poetry, novel, in short, literature as a means to make revolutions. In relation to this, Georgi Dimitrov in his Speech given during an anti-Fascist evening in the Writers' Club in Moscow referred to Georg Lukács's 'Realism in the Balance' and mentioned that, in its day the revolutionary bourgeoisie conducted a violent struggle in the interests of its own class; it made use of every means at its disposal, including those of imaginative literature. What was it that made the vestiges of chivalry the object of universal ridicule? Cervantes' *Don Quixote*. *Don Quixote* was the most powerful weapon in the arsenal of the bourgeoisie in its war against feudalism and aristocracy. The revolutionary proletariat could do with at least one little Cervantes (*laughter*) to arm it with a similar weapon. (Laughter and applause.)⁵⁵

The important fact is that considering his realism, Georg Lukács made use of imaginative literature as a means, a weapon to lead a struggle against the bourgeoisie in the interests of its class. At this level, we also read through Wole Soyinka plays frames of political struggle of this kind. We will develop this, making use also of the German critical thought of the classical authors to analyze Soyinka's aesthetic frames.

In addition, Thomas Mann remains so 'old-fashioned', so 'traditional'. He knows how thoughts and feelings grow out of the life and how experiences and emotions are parts of the total complex of reality. As a realist, he assigns these parts to their rightful place within the total life context. He shows what area of society they arise from and where they are going to. Thomas Mann shows how and why he still is a bourgeois, for all his hostility to the bourgeoisie, his homelessness within bourgeois society, and his exclusion from life of the bourgeois. Because he does all this, Mann towers as a creative artist and in his grasp of the nature of society, above all those 'ultra-radicals' who imagine that their anti-bourgeois mood, their – often purely aesthetic – rejection of the stifling nature of petty – bourgeois existence have transformed them into foes of bourgeois society. Any fixed or inherited concept of 'popular art' was contaminated by notoriously reactionary traditions, especially in Germany. To reach the exploited classes in the tempestuous era of their final struggle with their exploiters, art had to change together with their own revolutionary spirit of the world and of themselves.

⁵⁵ Georg Lukács 'Realism in the Balance' in *Aesthetics and Politics*, edited by Ernst Bloch et al., op. cit. p. 28.

In order to clarify this change, it would help to take into account the legitimacy and stringency of Brecht's riposte to Lukács in the oblique polemic are plain and tonic. Brecht's positions have, in fact, won very wide assent on the Marxist Left in West Germany since the recent publication of his texts, on the eve of the political rebirth of 1968. Brecht was unable to single out the weaknesses and paradoxes of Lukács's literary theory. For all its narrowness and rigidity, Lukács's work represented real attempt to construct a systematic Marxist account of the historical development of European literature from the Enlightenment onwards. The precepts for 20th-century art with which it concluded were often nostalgic or retrograde; but analytically it was far more serious in its attention to the past, as the precondition of the present, than anything Brecht was to say. Brechtian aesthetic maxims always remained programme notes for his own productions. Brecht's precepts were far more emancipated than those of Lukács, but his theoretical reach was much shallower. The great vices of Lukács's system were its consistent Europocentrism, and its arbitrary selectivity within the diverse strands of European literature itself – in other words, it suffered from too little history. Brecht was not in a position to correct these defects: his own attitude to the European past was at best empirical and eclectic.

Theoretical challenges were made to the two men, which engaged the whole direction of their work. It is noticeable that the 'Western' debate reproduced the same dual problematic as its 'Eastern' counterpart: a dispute over both the art of the historical past of the 19th century, and the present aims and conditions of aesthetic practice in the 20th century. Brecht desired to broaden Marxist literary theory beyond the novel. The clash between Lukács and Brecht over contemporary issues involved opposed conceptions of what socialist works of art should be within a framework of declared political militancy. The most important of Brecht's claims in his polemic with Lukács was his assertion that his own plays found vital resonance with the German working-class itself. The extent of the vitality of this claim needs some scrutiny. Brecht's biggest successes in the Weimar period – above all, *The Three Penny Opera* – enjoyed a large bourgeois audience, in ordinary commercial theatres. His fuller conversion to Marxism post-dated them. His greatest plays were then written during exile and war without any contact with a German audience of any kind (*Mother Courage*: 1939; *Galileo Galilei*: 1939; *Puntilla*: 1941; *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*:

1944-5)⁵⁶. When they were finally staged in East Germany after the War, their audiences were certainly in the main proletarian, but since alternative entertainments (to use a Brechtian term) were not widely available in the DDR, the spontaneity and reality of working-class responses to the Berlin Ensemble remain difficult to estimate. But the overall structure of Brecht's dramaturgy was always potentially lucid and comprehensible to the spectators for whom it was designed. Brecht's example marks a frontier that has not been passed, or even reached again, by his successors.

As a result, it is important to bear in mind that, the subversive function of an anthology of Bertold Brecht's political essays that was published in Greece at the time the student movement was emerging. The collection was launched in 1971, four years after the military coup in Greece. Drawing on the notion of frame from social movements' theory, the paper focuses on the trajectory of the Green student movement and the aim that brought it forward as the most successful form of resistance against the junta. Then the paper illustrates how the Brecht anthology in particular captures the general climate of culture and political opposition that created the resonance deemed necessary for the success of the student movement.

The Caucasian Chalk Circle is a play by the German modernist playwright, Bertold Brecht. As an example of Brecht's epic theatre, the play is a parable about a peasant girl who rescues a baby and becomes a better mother than its wealthy nature parents. *The Caucasian* is now considered one of Brecht's most celebrated works and is one of the most regularly performed 'German' play. Brecht uses the device of a 'play within a play'. The 'frame' of the play is set in the Soviet Union around the end of the Second World War. It shows a dispute between two communes, the Collective Fruit Farm Galinsk fruit growing commune and the Collective Goat Farmers, over who is to own and manage an area of farm land after the Nazis have retreated from a village and left it abandoned. Singer and band of music keep the play running smoothly. We would like to emphasize Brecht critical ideas concerning the role of epic theatre.

Brecht was also a theatrical reformer whose epic theatre departed from the conventions of theatrical illusion, and developed the drama as a social and ideological forum for leftist causes. He has also developed a violently antibourgeois attitude that

⁵⁶ Ibid. p. 67.

reflected his generation's deep disappointment in the civilization that had come crashing down at the end of World War I.

The essence of his theory of drama, as revealed in his work, is the idea that a truly Marxist drama must avoid the Aristotelian premise that the audience should be made to believe that what they are witnessing is happening here and now. For he saw that if the audience really felt that the emotions of heroes of the past such as Hamlet could equally have been their own reactions, then the Marxist idea that human nature is not constant but a result of changing historical conditions would automatically be invalidated. Brecht therefore argued that, the theatre should not seek to make its audience believe in the presence of, the characters on the stage, nor make it identify with them. But, the theatre should rather follow the method of the epic poet's art, which is to make the audience realize that what it sees on stage is merely an account of past events that it should be watched with critical detachment.

Brecht used his poetry to criticize European culture, including Nazism, and the German bourgeois. Brecht's poetry is marked by the effects of the First and Second World Wars. Many of the poems take a Marxist outlook, celebrating the defeat of a capitalist system. Throughout his theatric production, poems are incorporated into his plays with music.

Furthermore, we could think that, Marxist aesthetics is a theory of aesthetics based on, or derived from, the theories of Karl Marx. It might involve a dialectical and materialist approach to the application of Marxism to the cultural sphere, specifically areas related to taste such as art, beauty, etc. From one classic Marxist point of view, the role of art is not only to represent such conditions truthfully, but also to seek to improve them (social/ socialist realism). This is an interpretation of significant writing by Marx and Engels on art and especially on aesthetics. Marxist aesthetics is also concerned with art practice. The aim of science is also important to a Marxist aesthetics. Some notable Marxist aestheticians include William Morris, Theodor W. Adorno, Bertold Brecht, Georg Lukács, Frederic Jameson, Roland Barthes, etc. Brecht may be said to have a Marxist aesthetics that is revealed through his artistic work, but his aesthetic theory is something distinct and appears as theory by him about his own artistic production, about art in general, and on questions of taste and its role in society.

Brecht's relationship to Marxism is extremely important and highly complex. Of a strongly anti-bourgeois disposition from his youth, he experienced the German

revolution of 1918 with some ambivalence, and dedicated himself to literary and not political activity during the turbulent early years of the Weimar republic. Yet from the beginning of his literary career, Brecht was an enemy of the established bourgeois society. Brecht composed a strongly anti-bourgeois play *Baal* (1918-1919), and in 1919 he wrote *Drums in the Night*, a play that dealt with the disillusionment after World War I and the German revolution. The returning soldier in the play, Kragler, turned his back on the German revolution after the war in favor of going to bed with his girlfriend.

Literature must be freed from constricting rules and old regulations, and from methods of description. Literature, to be understood, must be considered in its development. To take an example from politics; if ones wants to counter putsches, he must teach revolution, not evolution.

In art there is the fact of failure, and the fact of partial success. Metaphysicians must understand this. Works of art can fail so easily; it is so difficult for them to succeed. One man will fall silent because of lack of feeling; another, because his emotion chokes him. A third frees himself, not from the burden that weighs on him, but only from a feeling of unfreedom. A fourth breaks his tools because they have too long been used to exploit him. Defeats should be acknowledged; but one should not conclude from them that there should be no more struggles.

Political and philosophical considerations failed to shape the whole structure, the message was mechanically fitted into the plot. Literature cannot be forbidden to employ skills newly acquired by contemporary man, such as the capacity for simultaneous registration, bold abstraction, or swift combination. Artists like to take short cuts, to conjure things out of the air, to work their way through large sections merely formal, literary criteria for realism. Realistic means, discovering the causal complexes of society/ unmasking the prevailing view of things as those who are in power/ writing from the standpoint of the class which offers the broadest solutions for the pressing difficulties in which human society is caught up/ emphasizing the element of development/ making possible the concrete, and making possible abstraction from it.

Moreover, in a cautious way, we shall not allow the artist to employ his fantasy, his originality, his humour, his invention, in following them. We shall stick to too detailed literary models; we shall not bind the artist to too rigidly defined modes of

narrative. Realism is not a mere question of form. New problems appear and demand new methods. Reality changes; in order to present it, modes of presentation must also change. Nothing comes from nothing; the new comes from the old that is why it is new.

After the end of the Second World War, Bloch and Brecht, after some hesitation, chose to back Berlin in East Germany. Adorno returned Frankfurt in West Germany. Lukács moved immediately back to Budapest. Their freedom of expression was circumscribed. The end of Stalin's rule in 1953 unleashed a general political crisis in Eastern Europe. In July 1953, there was a workers' rising, with a wave of strikes and street clashes against the apparatus of East German state – suppressed with the aid of Soviet troops. Brecht reacted to this revolt of the masses with a mixture of truculent bluff and sentimental pathos in his private diaries. In the view of Lukács, 'critical realism' was the sole means to artistic excellence in the contemporary West. In his own way, Brecht had rallied to it in his later plays, for all his professions to the contrary, to become 'the greatest realistic playwright of the age'.⁵⁷

Traditional aesthetic categories are comedy and tragedy, lyric, epic and dramatic.

The critical background I am providing will help me to approach Soyinka's plays taking into account social political relations. But the aesthetic frames become a signal. They act as ideological signs. Aesthetics is just the way the play transforms reality into sublimation, all the facts of real life into the high levels poetic, lyric, usually aesthetic; the Marxist interpretation of aesthetics means social facts. It is the Marxist approach to analysis. The historical connection between aesthetics and politics would also take into account the Marxist approach, because, the aesthetic treatment of society is basically lifted, it is basically progressive, post-structuralist and Marxist as well. It is the Marxist school of the plot applied to theatre.

From what we have already mentioned above, we understand that, in a more directly way, the play, the poem, the novel, in one word, literature becomes and provides the aesthetic appreciation of society. The historical background of aesthetics and politics in the Marxist and post-structuralist point of view makes this evident.

The 1980s and 90s were decades marked by the quarrel between Marxism and post-structuralism. Marxists were accused of being too wedded to totality, teleology, and economic determinism, while post-structuralists were accused of forgetting

⁵⁷ Ibid., pp. 87-9

history, agency, and replacing politics with the play of language. Post-structuralism is a label formulated by American academics to denote the heterogeneous works of a series of mid-20th century French and continental philosophers and critical theorists who came to international prominence in the 1960s and 70s. A major theme of post-structuralism is instability of fully escaping structures in order to study them. Post-structuralism is a response to structuralism. Structuralism is an intellectual movement developed in Europe from the early mid-20th century. It argued that human culture may be understood by means of a structure – modeled on language that differs from concrete reality and from abstract ideas.

We take for granted for this word that the concept of frame may clarify essential aspects of the dramatic experience. As it is, we know that the concept of frame derives from the field of communication and social theory.

I-2- FRAME AND SOCIAL THEORY.

A concept from general communication theory and social movement theory that can be fruitfully applied to the area of translation is the concept of frame. This term derives from the seminal work of Ervin Goffman *Frame Analysis* (1974) where ‘‘ the organization of experience’’ is examined in a wide swath of human activity, ranging also reader/ audience participation in a play. As Goffman notes:

I assume that definitions of a situation are built up in accordance with principles of organization which govern events – at least social ones - and our subjective involvement in them; frame is the word I use to refer to such of these basic elements as I am able to identify [...] My phrase ‘‘frame analysis’’ is a slogan to refer to the examination in these terms of the organization of experience.⁵⁸

Frames can be keyed (based on a model/ something already meaningful for participants but transformed into something else) frames that may or may not be the main concern of the participants.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ Ervin Goffman, *Frame Analysis* (Middlesex: Penguin, 1974), pp. 10-11.

⁵⁹ Ibid., pp. 44, 84, 204.

Goffman's metaphor of frame has been revived in social movement theory where meaning construction and the interpretation of events and conditions are essential for guiding action, individual or collective.⁶⁰ It involves assign[ing] meaning to and interpret[ing] relevant events and conditions in ways that are intended to mobilize potential adherents and constituents, to garner by stander support and to demobilize antagonists.⁶¹

To provide more helpful and useful details on the concept 'frame', 'frames', 'framing', 'framework' or 'reframing' we add that, its core functions are diagnosis, prognosis and motivation. Diagnostic framing involves identifying the problem and attributing blame or causality to specific agents; prognostic framing suggests solutions to the problem, identifies strategies, tactics and targets; motivational framing offers a rationale of action, or inducements for participation, be they material, status, solidarity, or moral inducements.⁶²

The three aspects of framing are usually closely interwoven. When combined, they motivate participation by convincingly distinguishing "'insurgents ('us') from antagonists or irrelevant others ('them'), and by clearly representing the possibility, necessity, and efficacy of collective action by deliberate actors'".⁶³

Framing in social movements must also have resonance, if they are to be successful, that is, they need to be consistently articulated, to correspond with events in the world, and to be articulated by individuals who are credible and persuasive.⁶⁴

The diagnostic, prognostic and motivational aspects of the core functions of frames in Brecht's writing reflect a strictly Marxian perspective that emerged in a context of imminent war.

As for the question of the theory of 'Framing' especially what it is, the essential idea is, the major premise of framing theory is that an issue can be viewed from a

⁶⁰ David Snow et al, Frame Alignment Processes, Micromobilization, and Movement Participation. In *American Sociological Review*, (1986). Vol. 51: 464-481. DOI: 10.2307/2095581.

⁶¹ David A. Snow and D. Benford (1988), Ideology, Frame Resonance, and Participant Mobilization. In *International Social Movement Research*. 1: pp. 197-217.

⁶² Ibid., pp. 200-202

⁶³ Francesca Polletta, "'It Was Like a Fever...'" Narrative and Identity in Social Protest, in *Social Problems* (1998), 45 (2): 137-159, DOI: 10.152/ sp.1998.45.2.03x0163g

⁶⁴ Snow and Benford, op. cit., 2000: p. 619-621.

variety of perspectives and be construed as having implications for multiple values or considerations. Framing refers to the process by which people develop a particular conceptualization of an issue or reorient their thinking about an issue. A more precise definition of framing starts with a conventional expectancy value model of an individual's attitude (e.g., I. Ajzen & Fishbein (1980), Nelson et al. 1997b). An attitude toward an object, in this view, is the weighted sum of a series of evaluative beliefs about that object.

In a communication a frame ‘organizes everyday reality’⁶⁵ by providing ‘meaning to an unfolding strip of events’⁶⁶ and promoting ‘particular definitions and interpretations of political issues’⁶⁷, an issue or event is identified⁶⁸. Again in communication, a frame can be defined only in relation to a specific issue, event, or political actor. For example, the frames for social security reform differ from the frames for immigration reform. Traditional issues can therefore potentially be transformed into new issues by reframing. Frames in communication affect the attitudes and behaviors of their audiences. Politicians often adopt communication frames used by other politicians, the media, or citizens.⁶⁹

Research on framing is characterized by theoretical and empirical vagueness. This is due, in part, to the lack of a commonly shared theoretical model underlying framing research. Entman referred to framing as ‘a scattered conceptualization’. Entman offered a more detailed explanation of how media provides audiences with schemas for interpreting events. For him, essential factors are selection and salience: ‘To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/ or treatment recommendation’⁷⁰.

⁶⁵ G. Tuchman, *Making News* (New York: Free, 1978), p. 193.

⁶⁶ WA, Gamson and A., Modigliani, 1989, Media Discourse and Public Opinion on Nuclear Power: A Constructionist Approach, *Am. J. Sociol.* 95: 1-37.

⁶⁷ DV Shah, Watts MD, Dombé D, Fan DP, 2002, ‘New Framing and Cueing of Issue Regimes: Explaining Clinton’s Public Approval in Spite of Scandal, in *Public Opin.* Q. 66: 339-70, p. 342.

⁶⁸ R. M. Entman, *Projects of Power: Framing News, Public Opinion, and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Chicago: University Chicago Press, 2004), pp. 23-24.

⁶⁹ JN Druckman, 2004, Political Preference Formation: Competition, Deliberation, and the (ir) Relevance of Framing Effects, *Am. Polit. Sci. Rev.* 98: 671-86.

⁷⁰ R. M. Entman, ‘Framing: Towards Classification of a Fractured Paradigm’, in *Journal of Communication*, 1993; 43 (4): 51-58, p. 52.

Despite its omnipresence across the social sciences and humanities, nowhere is there a general statement of framing theory that shows exactly how frames become embedded within and make themselves manifest in a text, or how framing influences thinking. The concept of framing consistently offers a way to describe the power of a communicating text. Analysis of frames illuminates the precise way in which influence over a human consciousness is exerted by the transfer (or communication) of information from one location – such as a speech, utterance, news report, novel, or play – to that consciousness. A literature review suggests that framing is often defined casually, with much left to an assumed tacit understanding of reader and researcher. After all, the words frame, framing, and framework are common outside of formal scholarly discourse, and their connotation there is roughly the same.

According to Fairhurst and Sarr (1996) framing consists of three elements: language, thought, and forethought. Language helps us to remember information and acts to transform the way in which we view situations. To use language, people must have thought and reflected on their own interpretive framework and those of others. In addition, Fairhurst and Sarr (1996) describe the framing effect of metaphors, stories, traditions, slogans, jargon and catchphrases, artifacts, contrast, and spin. Metaphors are used to give an idea or program a new meaning by comparing it to something else. Stories (myths and legends) frame a subject by anecdote in a vivid and memorable way. Traditions including rites, rituals and ceremonies are used to pattern and define an organization at a regular time increments to confirm and reproduce organizational values. Slogans, jargon and catchphrases frame a subject in a memorable and familiar fashion. Artifacts are used to illuminate corporate values through physical vestiges (sometimes in a way language cannot). Contrast describes a subject in terms of what it is not. Spin are used to talk about a concept so as to give it a positive or negative connotation.

Framing is a useful tool for analysis, because it allows us to view the particular frames that people use when examining a particular issue. If we come to understand the various frames that individuals use to distinguish important from unimportant information, then we can achieve a better understanding of why people take the positions that they do, and we can learn about how and why people respond as they do when interpreting a particular situation.

In social sciences, framing comprises a set of concepts and theoretical perspectives on how individuals, groups, and societies organize, perceive, and communicate about reality. Framing involves the social construction of a social phenomenon – by mass media sources, political or social movements, political leaders, or other actors and organizations. It is an inevitable process of selective influence over the individual's perception of the meanings attributed to words or phrases. It is generally considered in one of two ways: as frames in thought, consisting of the mental representations, interpretations, and simplifications of reality, and frames in communication, consisting of the communication of frames between different actors. In social theory, framing is a schema of interpretation that individuals rely on to understand and respond to events.

In Politics Lakoff argues that, in order to persuade a political audience of one side and argument or another, the facts must be presented through a rhetorical frame. It is argued that, without the frame, the facts of an argument become lost on an audience, making the argument less effective. The rhetoric of politics uses framing to present the facts surrounding an issue in a way that creates the appearance of a problem at hand that requires a solution. Politicians using framing to make their own solution to an exigence appear to be the most appropriate compared to that of the opposition. Framing a political issue is a strategic goal in politics. From a political perspective, framing has widespread consequences. The concept of framing links with that of agenda-setting by consistently involving a particular frame.

The history and orientation of 'framing' make clear that the concept of framing is related to the agenda-setting tradition but expands the research by focusing on the essence of the issues at hand rather than on a particular topic. The basis of framing theory is that the media focuses attention on certain events and then places them within a field of meaning. Framing is an important topic since it can have a big influence and therefore the concept of framing expanded to organizations as well.

As for the core assumptions and statements of 'framing', the media draws the public attention to certain topics the journalists select. In news items occur more than only bringing up certain topics. The way in which the news is brought, the frame in which the news is presented, is also a choice made by journalists. Thus the frame refers to the way media organizes and presents the events and issues they cover, and the way

audiences interpret what they are provided. Frames are abstract notions that serve to organize or structure social meanings.

I-3- POLITICS AND AESTHETICS.

According to Leftwich⁷¹ politics consists of all the activities of cooperation and conflict within and between societies, whereby the human species go about obtaining, using, producing and distributing resources in the course of the production and reproduction of its social and political life. Politics in this sense therefore enables the writer to examine the problems which occur within or between societies, institutions or groups, whether it is unemployment, war, famine, disease, overcrowding or various forms of conflict. Writers are members of the society and they make it a point of duty to write on all these political problems in the Society and suggest viable solutions to these problems.

Politics as can be defined by *The Webster's Dictionary* is the art and science of the government of a state opinions, principles or policies by which a person orders his participation in such affairs. Aesthetics can also be defined as the formal study of art especially relating to the enjoyment or study of beauty. The term aesthetics also means the description of an object or a work of art that shows great beauty. Geoffrey Poton also throws light on what the concept of politics is. He opines that politics is the way in which we understand and order our social affairs especially in relation to the allocation of scarce resources, the principle underlying this, and the means by which some people or groups acquire and maintain a greater control over the situation than others. Going by this definition, one sees that politics is above all a social activity that is concerned with people's social and material relationships. It is varied in expression in different spatial areas and continually changing through time. Therefore writers employ the concept of politics as part of the models or mental framework through which the writer interprets and tries to understand his environment and world around him.

Aesthetics is concerned with the beauty, arts, and the understanding of beautiful things. This implies the sociology of the context and the other material imperatives of culture in the historical development of the country from the beginning to the present.

⁷¹ A. Leftwich, *Redefining Politics* (London : Methuen, 1983), pp. 11-12.

Aesthetics can also be defined as the formal study of art especially relating to the enjoyment or study of beauty.

I-4- FRAMING SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ISSUES.

The wording of this section is a gerund phrase. In it, the gerund framing, which also means frame is the way an artist focuses on to something. Frame comes from photos, pictures. The role of frame is how the meaning of what is inside gets through the context, how the outside plays the important role in interpreting things, perceptions, and visions. Any aesthetic appreciation relies on the interchange between what is inside and what is outside. The frame refers to that relationship between the inside and outside. So, theatre, any piece of theatre and of other literary genres, the frame implies how you see the theatre, and how the theatre makes you see his theme, how it has to be interpreted, how it has to be visualized. So, the aesthetic effects are produced through the use of language, through the use of proverbs. All the chapters contribute to specify the aesthetic quality of the plays, the attributions, the perceptions of the plays.

Aesthetics is a very ambiguous term nowadays because there are so much criticism on its application. Actually, it comes from the German romanticism, and it is used very often, but it usually refers to qualities of the plays themselves. Those qualities are the language, the arguments, the reception, the way we react, etc. The sum of all those aspects makes possible perceptions the aesthetic qualities. Not just the language, but also the way we analyze intertextual variations, plots, physical actions, proverbs, songs, dance, the way music plays in those dramatic works make the aesthetic values. So, the aesthetic value is nothing definite, nothing objective, nothing concrete. It is just a constellation of perceptions. It is a constellation of aspects of the plays. That is why we begin with the language initially because we usually appreciate things from the way they have been written, from the way the play is written. So, we do need to write many pages on the aesthetic qualities because the dissertation proves how it is going to be appreciated when we write about the proverbs, the chapter we write on music, etc., all these chapters provide the aesthetic frames of the representation.

But, we need a more pages to justify the dissertation from the point of view of aesthetics. Aesthetics implies, not how the play reveals suffering from African culture, but how it interprets African culture, how it transforms African culture in these plays.

To avoid a restriction of the varieties of almost all the issues framed by Wole Soyinka through his drama, the relation between the concept ‘political issues’ and ‘social issues’ is to be seen in such a way that political issues include all the other possible issues that are frames in the literary works. This means also that, apart from social issues which are within political issues, there are many other issues such as environmental issues, ecological issues, climatic issues, gender issues, frontiers or borders issues, linguistics issues, etc.

To try to define the title of this section, we consider and write that ‘political and social issues’ are problems directly or indirectly affecting members of society and the processes by which groups of people make collective decisions. The election, the ruling of a country, democracy, dictatorship are the forms and the specific issues of politics. There are other interactions which have to be taken into consideration. They corporate education, and religious institutions. Basically it consists of social relations and issues that involve authority or power. Social issues are considered to be problems and controversies usually related to moral values, to tradition and religion often plays an important role. Specific social issues include animal rights, church and state, crime and punishment, the economy, education, the environment, human rights, poverty, unemployment, gender, etc. There are issues that we define directly as socio-political, corruption, war, terror, and violence, etc.

The connection between politics and aesthetics reflected in Wole Soyinka’s selected plays can be viewed as the ways and tools Soyinka uses to artistically construct the plays in relation to politics. Every writer exists within a society and as a member of such a society, he preoccupies himself with issues that arise within it.

As the whole dissertation explores the aesthetic features in Wole Soyinka’s selected plays, identifying, locating and giving their corresponding meanings, in this opening chapter, we make very brief comment and analysis of the way political and social issues have been framed.

Before we deal with the analysis of Wole Soyinka’s framing political and social issues in a more specific way, we find it important in the methodology of analysis to provide few details about Soyinka’s historical and political backgrounds, and few

critical perspectives notes which are to help understanding frame of political and social problems by Wole Soyinka.

To begin with, in Nigeria, Soyinka is highly, and bewilderingly, contextualized. He is not seen as a ‘towering, foreign, dramatic genius.’ He is ‘Yoruba’; ‘Ijebu’; ‘Old Boy of Government College’; ‘One of the Magnificent Seven’ (i.e., a Founder of the Pirates Confraternity); ‘been-to’; ‘meddlesome journalist’; ‘amateur politician’; Pagan; Road Safety Marshal; Professor; ‘Enemy of Gowon’; ‘Friend of Fajuyi’; ‘Socialist’; ‘Progressive’; ‘Revolutionary’; ‘Anti-Revolutionary’; ‘Liberal Humanist’...and so on. He is undoubtedly a significant force in Nigerian Theatre and society; creator of theatrical groups and of opportunities; setter of theatrical, sartorial and literary fashions; maker of powerful statements and of powerful enemies.⁷²

Mario Relich⁷³ in his article ‘Soyinka’s ‘Beggars’ Opera establishes a relationship of the kind of literary intertextuality we can see between Soyinka and Bertold Brecht. ‘Call it the Beggars’ Opera if you insist. That’s what the whole nation is doing – begging for a slice of the action.’ These words from the character called the Disc Jockey introducing the *Opera Wonyosi* set the tone of Wole Soyinka’s Africanized version of Bertold Brecht and Kurt Weill’s *Three Penny Opera*. Soyinka has converted it to a fable about Nigerian expatriate racketeers and ‘security advisors’ in the twilight days of Bokassa’s Central African Republic.

As for the beggars’ leaders, his crafty cynicism echoes Brecht’s original every step of the way, with a grotesque variation of his own when he explained about one of the ‘costumes’ he was renting out: ‘That’s the cheerful cripple – victim of modern road traffic. We call it the Nigerian special.’

Soyinka himself directed the ‘arias’ from the side of the stage, sometimes sporting a black leather jacket, at others covered in priestly robes. This was uncharitable construed as narcissism by someone, especially as he ordered the whipping of the Beggar-Professor at his first appearance, but actually it was an ironic parody of Brechtian alienation-technique.

⁷² *Research on Wole Soyinka*, edited by James Gibbs & Bernth Lindfors (New Jersey: Africa World Press, Inc., 1993), p. 77.

⁷³ James Gibbs (ed.), *Critical Perspectives on Wole Soyinka* (Washington, D.C.: Three Continents Press, Inc., 1980), pp. 128-9.

Though Soyinka's songs were entertaining enough in performance. Brecht lyrics, however, seem light-hearted when compared to the rage behind Soyinka's.

There seemed to be no area of Nigerian public life untouched but, fortunately, relief from laughter at one's own expense was provided by "Boky's" Napoleonic antics – a worse plague than any Nigerian reality, however grim. Soyinka's exploitation, as the program note puts it, of "Bokassa's timely stride backwards into pre-history," proved to be a cleverly amusing substitute for the Victorian Jubilee climas in Brecht's play.

Boky was at his most outrageous when he drilled his goon-squad with encouraging words like: "I am an egalitarian. If I were not an egalitarian I would not be among you dregs, you scum, you residue de bidet!". He also expatriates on the "mother country": "Our mother country, not content with being the cradle of revolution, is also the cradle of culture. If you are not French."

The play itself is minor Soyinka, but then neither was the *Three-Penny Opera* Brecht's best work, and its continued popularity is mainly due to Kurt Weill's unforgettable music.⁷⁴ Soyinka is a sophisticate whose making free use of the tricks and techniques of European literatures are seen by some as a contradiction.⁷⁵ Soyinka's writing is paradoxically the very source of this strengths as a writer, this being his tremendous investment in the power of language, specifically the power of metaphor, symbol, myth, archetype, and other figures to make words and language hard to hold down to function and referent as conceived by literal, positivist and intentionalist usages. It is my believe that where (ever) Soyinka falters aesthetically and ideationally, it is almost always the case that this is the result of his overconfident faith in the power of language to withhold or reveal at will. This, I have argued, is a result of a probably overconfident faith in the power of his superior gifts and talents, unmindful of readerly resistances to, and mistrust of language, especially language that is often performatively dazzling.

⁷⁴ *Critical Perspectives on Wole Soyinka*, edited by James Gibbs (Washington, D.C.: Three Continent Press, Inc., 1980), pp. 128-9.

⁷⁵ Biodun Jeyifo (ed.), *Perspectives on Wole Soyinka: Freedom and Complexity* (Mississippi: University Press of Mississippi, 2001), p. xvii.

The ultimate challenge of Soyinka's works and career lies in the fact that the metanarratives that imaginatively and discursively legitimated the great liberation movement of the twentieth century do not feature in his works in their conventional and familiar configurations. These movements include the anti-colonial revolutions which pitched colonies and 'postcolonies' against empires and metropolitan centres of global power; the class struggles of working people and the poor for better conditions of life and work; the struggles for gender equality in the home, in the workplace and for the control of bodies and reproductive rights. And overarching all the struggles waged by these movements is the struggle for self-representation as the existential and expressive roots of human freedom.⁷⁶

Nearly all the major protagonist figures in Soyinka's writings, as in the great dramatic parables of Bertolt Brecht, bear the marks or the traces of the ambiguous, aporetic doubleness in relation to the striving for human emancipation. I hope that enough has been said in this study to indicate that this pattern reflects, on Soyinka's part, neither a reactionary recoil from all talk of revolution that is a decisive feature of the ideological temper of the present historical period, nor a convergence with the postmodernists' radical skepticism concerning the place of reason in revolution and its agents and forces.

This pertains to the great theoretical and practical investment of Soyinka's writings and career, taken as a whole, in being representative of the capacity of the heritage of imagination and spirit in Africa to respond adequately and even powerfully to the challenges and dilemmas of modernity as African peoples and societies have experienced them through colonial capitalism and the ravages of neocolonial marginalization in the global order of 'late,' transnational capitalism. Soyinka has in nearly all his major works approached these challenges and dilemmas through imaginative prism of what he deems inextricable dualities in nature and human existence in general, but with particular regard to the phenomenon of violence: destruction and creation, reactionary terror and restorative, cleansing bloodletting. But there is a pragmatic, even revolutionary sociology involved as well, for Soyinka has never abandoned his consuming need to expose and debunk the reactionary self-serving terror and violence of corrupt, tyrannical despots, even if he has steadfastly

⁷⁶ Biodun Jeyifo, *Wole Soyinka: Politics, Poetics and Postcolonialism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 279-284.

refused to romanticize and idealize the counter-hegemonic violence of his great protagonist characters and their followers. This is indeed why these protagonist characters of Soyinka's most ambitious works are men of violence who carry within themselves part of the evil which they oppose and try to confront by violently jolting complacencies of custom and thought in their societies.

At the bottom of Soyinka's artistic sensibilities and political activism is a profound preoccupation with the place of violence in human affairs and also in the process of nature. Violence in this conception is both productive and destructive, both potentially reactionary and revolutionary, depending on matters of circumstance, interests and will. If anything gives coherence to the extraordinary range of our author's activist involvements and interventions in the political life of his country in the last four decades, it is this utter preparedness not to flinch from the seeming central place of violence in human affairs, either in consolidating the reign of terror and repression in Africa and other regions of the world or, conversely in mobilizing effective opposition to the violence of the rulers as sedimented in the instruments of force and coercion.⁷⁷

Criminals appear frequently in his work and on some occasions, such as in *The Trials of Brother Jero*, there is almost a glorification of the criminal, as he is seen as the means by which the hidden corruption of the socially respectable is justifiably brought into great relief.

Soyinka's crusade against the established political order in Nigeria has a long history. In 1965, following disputed election results in western Nigeria, he was arrested in connection with a pirate broadcast made from the West Region Studios of the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation. He was charged with armed robbery of a tape, but was later acquitted on a legal technicality. He was arrested again and detained without trial during the Nigerian civil war (1967-70), this time for leading a campaign urging Western companies and governments to help end the war by stopping the supply of weapons to both parties in the conflict. In prison memoirs, *The Man Died* (1972), he offers a detailed account of the dehumanizing conditions in which he was kept, which included solitary confinement.

Soyinka's commitment to justice has not been confined to Nigerian issues. His political commitment and his literary achievements have earned him a number of

⁷⁷ Biodun Jeyifo, *Wole Soyinka: Politics, Poetics and Postcolonialism*, op. cit., p. 284.

international award.⁷⁸ However, it was the award of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1986 that put paid to any lingering doubt about Soyinka's international stature. According to the Nobel Prize committee, what made Soyinka particularly qualified for the prize, in addition to his commitment to justice, was his universalism, his ability to transcend the culturally specific and communicate an essentially African experience to a global and diverse audience. As the representative of the Prize, Sture Allen, put it when introducing Soyinka at the award ceremony:

His name calls to mind poetic dramas rooted in African soil but with a global outlook [...] He is a writer and a fighter in the service of the human mind making full use of a unique literary and linguistic arsenal.⁷⁹

Soyinka's achievement was a great cause for international celebration, particularly in Africa and the African diaspora. A number of heads of state sent messages of congratulation. In his home country, ordinary people, the media, and the government hailed him a hero. He was made "Commander of the Federal Republic" by President Babangida and, for Chinua Achebe, the other stalwart of African literature, the award was most welcome because "one of us has proved that we can beat the White man at his own game. That is wonderful for us and for the White man."⁸⁰

The African-American critic Henry Louis Gates, Jr. was equally ecstatic, seeing Soyinka's achievement not only as a validation of African culture, but also as a "great day for Africans in the Old World and the New."⁸¹ It is worth bearing in mind that Wole Soyinka has not always received unqualified praise from critics. He has been described as an obscurantist, a universalist and a Euro-modernist, among other things.⁸² It is Soyinka's transference of revolutionary action from collective to

⁷⁸ Mpalive-Hangson Msiska, *Postcolonial Identity in Wole Soyinka* (New York: Editions Rodopi B. V., 2007), p. xvi.

⁷⁹ Sture Allen, "Introduction to Wole Soyinka's Nobel Lecture, 8 December, 1986," *Black American Literature Forum* 22.3 (Fall 1988): p. 427.

⁸⁰ Quoted in Bernth Lindfors, "Beating the White Man at His Own Game," *Black American Literature Forum* 22. 3 (Fall 1988), p. 477.

⁸¹ Henry Louis Gates, Jr., "Introduction," *Black American Literature Forum*, 22. 3 (Fall 1988), p. 422.

⁸² Mpalive-Hangson Msiska, *Postcolonial Identity in Wole Soyinka*, op. cit., p. xxii.

individual agency that robs his work of its radical potential.⁸³ Even an otherwise sympathetic Marxist critic, Chidi Amuta, finds it difficult to reconcile Soyinka's attempt to "proffer mythic explanations and resolutions for social problems which ordinarily belong in the realm of historical reality and empirical human experience" with his "'secular' and radical appreciation of the class cleavages within the Nigerian social formation."⁸⁴

Wole Soyinka dismisses the views of what he calls the "leftocracy," by arguing and demonstrating that their criticism is symptomatic of a marked ignorance of the relationship between art and life in general:

The province of the artist, while it does not exclude a direct interest in the class, socio-economic, psychological, and other possible promoters of his characters' being, on stage or on paper, is not such as cannot validly manifest itself in any given work without taking into its immediate provenance all or more of these various contributors to the history of that character, or his fate at curtain-time [...] A play, a novel, a poem, painting or any other creative composition is not a thesis on the ultimate condition of man. Even Marxism recognizes that revolutionary theory is incomplete in itself; the praxis, the operation of that theory is what constitutes the infallible test of that theory.⁸⁵

Marxists have found it very difficult to engage with Soyinka, since his political concerns are not fundamentally at odds with socialists ideals, even though he does not describe himself as a Marxist. However, as ever, Soyinka's preferred socialism is a type that liberates itself from the inflexibility of Marxist dogma and adapts itself to the local and immediate historical context.

In a swift gesture of recuperation, the veteran Marxist critic F. Odun Balogn contends that, far from being an expression of conservatism, Soyinka's work is socialist not only in terms of its commitment to egalitarianism, but also in its echoing of Lenin's view that Marxism was always a general system to be adjusted to fit each instance of historical elaboration.

In Mpalive-Hangson Msiska's view, Soyinka's work exemplifies a broader epistemological and political project in which a simultaneous unsettling of the established concepts and their framing orders of discourse is enacted. He never simply

⁸³ Chidi Amuta, "From Myth to Ideology: A Socio-Political Content of Soyinka's War Writings," *Journal of Commonwealth* 23.1 (1988): 118, 127.

⁸⁴ Amatu, "From Myth to Ideology," 118, 127.

⁸⁵ Wole Soyinka, "Foreword to 'Opera Wonyosi,'" in *Wole Soyinka, Six Plays* (London: Methuen, 1984): pp. 297-98.

inhabits the universal or the particular or the conjunction between the two – he occupies them strategically and parasitically, affirmatively as well as antagonistically. Soyinka shares with Viktor Shklovsky and other Russian Formalists – and, given Soyinka’s profound investment in drama, one might include Bertold Brecht as well – the belief that habit devours one’s wife or husband, that it numbs the mind and effects a massive closure on issues in process.⁸⁶ In order to counteract the effects of habit, as idea or as form, Soyinka effects an ideological as well as a formal defamiliarisation of the familiar, a process that sometimes makes it difficult for critics and readers alike to pin down either his politics or his quintessential style.⁸⁷ This is, in fact, one of the most distinctive contributions Soyinka has made to the reading and writing of contemporary African politics and culture. More than that, though, he has sought to move beyond the idea of identity as an absolute opposition between Self and Other to a conception of identity in which such concepts are either themselves questioned or transferred to a different frame or language where they are made to signify differently. It is Soyinka’s shifting of the axiomatic base of knowledge from European mythology to African mythology that enables him not only to revalorize postcolonial reason but also to affect a fundamental reordering of the epistemic hierarchy underlying the international order of knowledge. In this way, Soyinka proffers a method of reading the global from below, a veritable postcolonial dialectic.⁸⁸

The followings, are political and social issues that Wole Soyinka has framed in his plays that we have selected as the corpus of this dissertation. These plays are from two different collections. It is true that, all these plays are linked by their concern with the spiritual and the social, with belief and ritual as integration forces for social cohesion on the one hand, and on the other hand, they trace the ironic development and consequences of ‘progress’. Those issues are so numerous that the methodology

⁸⁶ In On this ‘automatisation’, see Viktor Shklovsky, ‘‘Art as Technique’’ (1916), in *Russian Formalist Criticism: Four Essays*, ed. & tr. Lee T. Lemon & Marion J. Reis (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1965): 3-24.

⁸⁷ This point has been touched on in Mpalive-Hangson Msiska, *Wole Soyinka* (Plymouth: Northcote/ British Council, 1998), p. 84.

⁸⁸ ‘‘Geopolitic and the Beyond: Rereading Homi Bhabha’s Location of Culture,’’ UCL – SOAS AHRB Centre for Asian and African Literatures, February 2004, and in Mpalive Msiska, ‘‘Geopolitics: Subterraneanity and Subversion in Malawian Poetry,’’ in *Essays on African Writing*, vol. 2, ed. Abdulrazak Gurnah (Oxford: Heinemann, 1995): 73-99.

we choose does not consists in listing them one by one, but to mention them according as they are framed in one play or many plays. We have written that all those issues are political in the sense that they are all about the lives of the people in society; but a sub categorization of these issues will prove helpful for an easy analysis and comment. This will also help to avoid confusion. In this effect, we will classify them according to their scientific area.

To begin with specific political issues, they would mainly include: incensed politicians at post-colonial Nigerian politics as aimless and corrupt, vision for a new Africa, one that is able to forge a new identity free from the influence of European imperialism; nationalism, democracy, injustice, corruption, lack of own country's political identity and orientations, lack of authority of state, dictatorship of traditional and modern leaders, confusing political transition, confused political alternance, absolute power from a republic back to an 'absolute monarchy', redefinition of North-South relations, instrumentalisation of highest intellectuals. Specific social issues framed by Wole Soyinka would also cover: superstitions instead of reason, the youth; the village and the town, the better relationships between Christians and Muslim, gender, unemployment, African hospitality, sacrifice, polygamy, hard works, equality of races, poverty, crimes and punishment, crimes and impunity, etc. Specific cultural issues include: revalidation of culture. As to the specific environmental issues I would include: deforestation, pollution, wildfire, agriculture and climatic instability, flood. Specific linguistic issues include linguistic alienation, multilingualism. Specific socio-economic issues are: road network, its weak traffic technology causing road accidents and death instead of positive effects such as reducing the distance between people, markets, services and knowledge, the socio-economic development and subsequent economic growth of a nation. Specific religious issues are: religious hypocrisy. Specific moral issues are refusal to acknowledge, recognize and accept one's wrongdoings, the self and the other: cooperation instead of rely, forgery of driving licence, the principle of the survival of the fittest.

In addition to the above framed issues by Wole Soyinka in his dramatic works, there are a certain number of issues that the author has reframed in his plays. They are: colonization, slavery, wars, unglorious African past, etc.

Now almost major framed issues are identified. The next step, normally consists in elaborating more a bit on the framing, that is the way these issues framed, which are

also the ways the inside come to the outside, the reader. This involves Wole Soyinka as a framer, a reframer sometimes and his plays, and the reader that we are.

Furthermore, the whole dissertation is what the aesthetic features in Wole Soyinka's plays about. At this level of the thesis, we find that, in the context of this chapter, the concepts 'aesthetic features' and 'framing, reframing issues' are synonymous in the extent that they both mean the ways, manners, and forms through, first of all, real life events are depicted by the means of literary tools, then, the way the readers perceive everyday life in arts in general and in the plays particular. In front of such reality, that is, the whole dissertation deals with the aesthetic features which mean also the aesthetic frames, to avoid repetition which could be detrimental to the quality of this dissertation, we find it better to only give very brief details of framing specific issues in the plays. In addition, all the issues mentioned above are, for some, main themes of the plays, and other, sub themes of the plays. In this respect, analysis and commenting upon them one by one could result the fragmentation of ideas. To avoid this situation, we find it better to focus on the framings of the main issues in the plays. At this level, the central issues framed by Wole Soyinka in his plays can be listed as follows: conflict between the past and the present in the context of time and place of Nigerian post independence; the nature of African family which include hospitality, superstition, traditional belief, conflict of urban and rural values; sacrifice; corruption: political corruption, corruption of religious leaders, corruption of African culture; dictatorship of traditional and modern leaders; religious hypocrisy.

To begin with the analysis and comment of framing issues in a more specific way, the first issue which is conflict between the past and the present is framed and read in *A Dance of the Forests*. In this play, the frame of this issue covers the whole work, and it appears through different forms (characters, actions, ideas, dramatic forms, etc.). The most important is the refusal of the living characters such as Demoke, Rola, Adenebi and Obaneji to welcome Dead Man and Dead Woman as participants in the 'Gathering of the Tribes'. In the mind of organizers, this ceremony remembers the glory of their empires whereas the dead pair sees in it the occasion to examine the past even the past crimes committed to guarantee the present and the future which are also the independence period and the post independence period of their country, Nigeria. In addition, the framing of this issue is closely linked to that of injustice and slavery

in the extent that, in their first existence, Dead Man and Dead Woman experienced injustice causing them be sent in slavery in the court of Mata Karhibu. In fact, Dead Man who was a soldier refused to fight an unjust war and resisted the queen's sexual temptation, as a consequence, he was emasculated and sold in as slave, and his wife who was pregnant gave birth a half-child. In the context of Nigerian independence and post independence period, this framing conveys the message that, a non-examination and true examination of the past, its crimes might lead to a premature independence which the birth of a half-child means.

Then, framing the nature of African family, its superstition, traditional belief, conflict of urban and rural values is read in *The Swamp Dwellers*. Through this framing we discover the hospitality that Alu and Makuri in their swampy village situated in the south offer to the blind Beggar who comes from the dry north of the country. In addition, this framing also describes the better relationships that must exist between Christians and Muslims because, the Beggar who is received is from the North, the Muslim part of the country. In relation to this ideal of better relationships between Christians and Muslims, Wole Soyinka, in his interview on 'Voice for Human Rights, Democracy and Freedom' says:

First, we had to go to church every Sunday – morning and evening on Sundays. Then there was Sunday school. The various seasons were observed. You know, Easter, Christmas. I enjoyed those seasons, anything to do with festivals was okay by me. And that included the Muslim festivals. Because even though we lived in a Christian missionary compound – a parsonage, as it was called – St Peter's Parsonage, we had Muslim neighbors. And the interaction between the two faiths was quite a normal accommodative communal kind of existence. Not the kind of murderous nonsense you have these days, religious extremists and so on. We celebrated, with the Muslims, their festivals – the Eid, the Ramadan, et cetera, sometimes even observed part of their fast days. And then were the traditionalists, as I said.⁸⁹

The passage above is the answer to the question about if the people from a different religion around him influenced him. The essential message is that Wole Soyinka had Muslim neighbors. The interaction between their Christian faith and their neighbors' Muslim faith was quite a normal accommodative communal kind of existence. This is an ideal, and Wole Soyinka's framing through the scene in *The Swamp Dwellers* which involves Alu, Makuri and the Beggar show such hospitality, coexistence,

⁸⁹ <http://www.achievement.org/autodoc/page/soy0int-4> (March 2015).

cooperation, harmony, symbiose, in short, all the qualities required for a communal life, even the availability of agricultural land for everybody and everywhere be they Christian or Muslims. In addition, the citation above also writes that these days, with all the murderous nonsense both, religious extremists, Christians and Muslims do not actually recognize human rights for each other. Efforts must be done in both sides so that these two faith interact in a normal accommodative communal existence following Alu-Makuri-Beggar's model framed in *The Swamp Dwellers*. We also find it important to mention that, apart from the geographical situation of their swampy village, the South, which also mean Christianity, Makuri reveals that she is Christian through the use of the proverbs: 'Every god shakes a beggar by the hand' (p. 91), 'The hands of the gods are unequal' (p. 100).

In addition, as Wole Soyinka, George Bernard Shaw writes:

Islam is very difficult, being ferociously intolerant. What I may call Manifold Monotheism becomes in the minds of very simple folk an absurdly Polytheistic idolatry, just as European peasants not only worship Saints and the Virgin as Gods, but will fight fanatically for their faith in the ugly little black doll who is the Virgin of their own Church against the black doll of the nest village. When the Arabs had run this sort of idolatry to such extremes [that] they did this without black dolls and worshipped any stone that looked funny, Mahomet rose up at the risk of his life and insulted the stones shockingly, declaring that there is only one God, Allah, the glorious, the great... And there was to be no nonsense about toleration. You accepted Allah or you had your throat cut by someone who did accept Him, and who went to Paradise for having sent you to Hell.⁹⁰

The essential idea in the quotation above by Bernard Shaw is religious intolerance in largest Christian minority in any majority Islamic nation. This excerpt goes beyond to mention even religious persecutions that Christians are victims in Islamic countries. Non-conformists to Islamic religion have their throat cut by Muslims extremists. Above all, Shaw conveys the message of religious tolerance and freedom of religion. We find it also important to mention that George Bernard Shaw was an Irish playwright. He is the only person to have been awarded both a Nobel Prize for Literature in 1925 and an Oscar in 1938. He claimed publically to denounce what he called "Shakespeare worshipers," but was also taken by Shakespeare's influence.

Next, framing sacrifice is the central theme Wole Soyinka's *The Strong Breed*. Sacrifice in this framing, is a human sacrifice so that the rest of the population be free

⁹⁰ Letter to the Reverend Ensor Walters (1933), as quoted in 'Bernard Shaw: Collected Letters, 1926-1950' (1988) by Dan H. Laurence, p.305.

from their sins. Eman descends from a carrier father. In this respect, he is one of the strong breed. To avoid to be a carrier in his community according to his tie, he escapes. He goes to a far village. As a stranger in that village, he takes freely the place of Ifada who is choosen as a carrier in the village. Reading this framing, it comes to light that Wole Soyinka to some extent satirizes the traditional ritual which consists in choosing a member of the community and kill him so that the sins and the impurities of the other people are cleaned, and all the negative consequences that carry their impurities are annulled. Framing sacrifice in *The Strong Breed* is Wole Soyinka's satire of the traditional ritual of carrier. This does not mean that Wole Soyinka is against tradition. He likes, defends, and revalidates traditions, but only the positive practices. Again, reading through this framing, makes us agree with Sole Soyinka because how and why the sinner people choose among themselves one sinner and kill him to save all the other sinners. Why a sinner can die for another sinner. With reference to *The Bible*, we read that Jesus Christ who did not commit any sin died for the whole humanity (sinners) so that whosoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life⁹¹.

Framing corruption is the main theme in *The Road*. In this play, framing corruption is twofold aspects. Wole Soyinka frames both political corruption and religious corruption. The main character of this play is Professor. He is implicated in the two types of corruption. Professor is literate. This situation sustains him above his followers. First of all, he is accused of political corruption because he illegally possesses a store specialized in selling motor spare parts coming from road accidents and all other things, even clothes of the victimses of raod accidents. In addition to that, Professor pulls up road signs which causes road accidents. He also forges driving licences. Secondly, Professor is accused of religious corruption because of the mismanagement of the church funds which causes his excommunication from the church.

As for framing of the corrupted African culture, Wole Soyinka emphasizes it in *The Lion and the Jewel* through the fights of Baroka with the modern Lakunle over the right to marry Sidi, the beautiful young girl of the village and the titular jewel. The followings are aspects of framing African culture: polygamy which allows Baroka, the traditional Chief of the village to have a harem full of the most beautiful ladies in the area. Allowed to marry as many girls as he can, Baroka uses girls only for his pleasure,

⁹¹ *The Holy Bible*, "John 3: 16".

and after a new arrival of his favorite he sends the last favorite to an outhouse. Then, the role of women such as Sadiku in the practice of go-between that is they seek new beautiful young girls for their husband, the practice through which men inheritate wives of their dead parents, the refusal by Lakunle to pay the bride price as a condition to marry Sidi. His attack of the traditional customs of marriage leads him call the system of bride-price ‘‘A savage custom, barbaric, out dated, rejected, denounced, accursed, excommunicated, degrading, humiliating, unspeakable, redundant, retrogressive, remarkable, unpalatable.’’⁹²

Furthermore, framing the dictatorship of traditional and modern rulers is the main theme in *Kongi's Harvest*. To frame this issue Wole Soyinka creates two characters: Oba Danlola and Kongi. They respectively represent the traditional system of government and the modern military system. In the action of the play, Kongi oppresses Oba Danlola and Sarumi. He asks Oba Danlola to surrender and present to him, the new leader the new yam which symbolizes power. Danlola refuses and his refusal leads Kongi to imprison him. Kongi installs government propaganda to disseminate only what he wants his subjects to be informed on and tortures people he considers to be enemies.

Last, but not least, framing religious hypocrisy is the concern of *The Trials of Brother Jero*. This issue is framed in the form of a charlatan, or fraud, named Brother Jero, who preaches to his followers on Bar Beach in Lagos, Nigeria. Jero is a master of manipulation and keeps his followers in a subservient position because he understands what they long for money, social status, and power. He convinces them that they will soon be able to fulfill these materialistic desires. For their part, they are gullible enough to believe him.

In the end, it becomes evident that aesthetic frames are contained materials and dramatic forms containers. The situation is the same with aesthetics and politics because at this level, aesthetics is synonymous with literature, the art based on imagination, the discipline which creates and re-creates meaning through observation, imagination, in one word, fiction. The word politics concerns every aspect of real social life. Wole Soyinka frames political and social issues in his dramatic works in the same way as his Western favorites. They also made use of imaginative literature as a means in the day the revolutionary bourgeoisie conducted a violent struggle in the

⁹² Wole Soyinka, ‘‘The Lion and the Jewel’’ in *Collected Plays 2*, op. cit. p.8.

interest of its classes. Light comes from literary school trends such as realism, Marxism, romanticism, structuralism, post structuralism, modernism, etc. These approaches help Wole Soyinka through the reading of his European favorites' literary works to frame issues with the aim of claiming human rights, more human rights, democracy, etc. He uses comedy, lyric, epic, satire, proverbs, balance, reference, allusions, dance, songs, movements, etc. as frames.

CHAPTER II

LANGUAGE AND INTERTEXTUALITY

The need to provide the meaning of the literary text has always been the issue of main concern. At the beginning of the twentieth century the Romance countries were mainly influenced by Charles Bally's expressive stylistics and Croce's individual stylistics, a new literary trend developed in Russia and became known as formalism. The Russian Formalists introduced a new, highly focused and solid method of literary analysis.

The content of a literary work was seen as the sum of its stylistic methods. In this way, the formal characteristics of a literary work, based on the analytical view of the form, are viewed in opposition to its content. In other words, the focus was on devices of artistry answering the question 'how' not on content, that is 'what'. In spite of the short, about ten-year, existence of Russian formalism, many ideas were modified and further elaborated. They became part of structuralism, the idea which entered also into drama and theatre studies. The influence of structuralism on stylistics was crucial. One of the main aspects of the current is described as follows: the analyses of particular works were based on language analysis because it was assumed that in a literary work all components (language, content, composition) are closely inter-related within the structure.

In relation to this, we consider the clear boundaries drawn by J. Mistrik between stylistic analysis and literary interpretation. He defines stylistics or text analysis as a procedure which aims at the linguistic means and devices of a given text, the message, topic and content of analysed texts or non literary texts are not the focus⁹³. From that point of view literary interpretation is a process which applies exclusively to literary texts, it aims at understanding and interpreting the topic, content and the message of a literary work.

This definition is also shared by Widdowson who, as J. Mistrik provides a more informative definition. He defines stylistics as 'the study of literary discourse from a linguistic orientation'⁹⁴ and takes 'a view that what distinguishes stylistic from literary criticism on the one hand and linguistics on the other hand is that, it is essentially a means of linking the two'⁹⁵. In addition, Leech holds a similar view. He defines stylistics as the 'study of the use of language in literature'⁹⁶ and considers

⁹³ J. Mistrik, *Stylistika* (Slovensky pedagogicke nakladatel'stvo, 1985), p.31.

⁹⁴ K. Wales, *A Dictionary of Linguistics* (London: Longman, 1900).

⁹⁵ Widdowson H. G. *Stylistics and Teaching of Literature* (London: Longmann, 1975), p. 3.

⁹⁶ Leech G. N., 'This bread I break' Language and Interpretation. 'In D.C. Freedman. (ed.). *Linguistics and Literature* (New York: Holt, Richard & Winston, 1969), p. 1.

stylistics a ‘meeting-ground of linguistics and literary study’⁹⁷. From what Widdowson and Leech say, we can see that stylistics is an area of study that straddles two disciplines: literary criticism and linguistics. It takes literary discourse that is also a text as its object of study and uses linguistics as a means to that end.

In this chapter, we carry out the analysis on the sense of interchangeability between stylistic analysis and literary interpretation. In this respect, stylistic analysis that is literary interpretation refers to the study of style which is the manner of writing and speaking, just as we might talk of someone’s writing in an ornate style, or speaking in a comic style. Style can be good or bad. It is obvious that dialogue is the best form of drama.

In other words, the language of plays mainly consists of dialogues. The author’s speech is in the form of stage remarks. Any presentation of a play is an aesthetic procedure. The language of a play has the following peculiarities: it is stylized (retains the modus of literary English); it presents the variety of spoken language; it has redundancy of information caused by necessity to amplify the utterance; monologue is never interrupted; character’s utterances are much longer than in ordinary conversation. So, style can be seen as variation in language use in literary works for delivering the message.

This naturally involves comparisons of the language of the text with that used in conventional types of discourse. Stylisticians may also wish to characterize the style of a literary text by systematically comparing the uses in that text with those in another. Halliday points out: ‘the text may be seen as ‘this’ in contrast with ‘that’, with another play; stylistics studies are essentially comparative in nature.’⁹⁸ On this point, Widdowson is of the same opinion as Halliday. He says: ‘All literary appreciation is comparative as indeed is a recognition of styles in general.’⁹⁹

Furthermore, the choice of items, their distribution and patterning make style the general stock of the language in any period: Another differential approach to style is to compare one set of features with another in terms of a deviation from a norm, a common approach in the 1960’s.

⁹⁷ Leech G. N. Op. cit. p.2

⁹⁸ Halliday M. A.K., *Linguistic Function and Literary Style...* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), p.341.

⁹⁹ Widdowson H. G. op. cit. P.84

By far the most common kind of material studied is literary, and attention is text-centred. The goal of most stylistic analyses is not simply to describe the formal features of texts for their own sake, but to show their functional significance for the interpretation of the text; or to relate literary effects to linguistic causes where these are felt to be relevant. This may also mean that analysing a text stylistically we aim to explain how the words of a text create the feelings and responses what we get when we read them. We understand that stylistics is useful as a method of interpreting texts.

In plain English, our interest in general, is to locate more in the modernist techniques and devices Wole Soyinka employs to present the inner world of the characters in his stories, than in his unique artistry in using the variety of language commonly known as style. This chapter however, is concerned primarily with the language variations, style, and intertextual variations of *A Dance of the Forests*, *The Swamp Dwellers*, *The Strong Breed*, *The Road*, *The Lion and the Jewel*, *The Trials of Brother Jero* and *Kongi's Harvest*. Again, it aims to provide an integrative, systematic stylistic analysis of the plays, deriving its underlying theories from a method of prose text analysis, proposed by literary stylists Leech and Short as far as language variations are concerned, Roland Barthes and Julia Kristeva for intertextual variations. The analysis is done in three main steps corresponding to the four main 'linguistic levels' of a text: lexical levels, and grammatically levels. The elements of style are vocabulary, syntax, rhythm etc. We are concerned especially with the study of Pidgin English, American colloquial English, and Nigerian simplified English. This also integrates the ways Wole Soyinka uses dialogue.

II-1- LANGUAGE VARIATIONS.

Reading Wole Soyinka's plays that constitute the corpus of this thesis results in the assertion that some of those plays are multilingual, that is to say they exploit a variety of language levels for dramatic effects. This study will focus on Wole Soyinka's *The Road*, and *The Trials of Brother Jero*. We mean that these two plays will be considered from the point of view of stylistic analysis, especially at the levels of language quality. The notion of language levels is not foreign to the tradition of multilingual literature. This is indeed the essence of multilingualistics in literary works. The evocation of the concept language levels is associated with American colloquial

English, simplified and Nigerian Pidgin English. In addition, the plays stand also on the use of informal and formal speeches as well as speeches in Standard English, and speeches in Yoruba language. Code switching and code mixing are also part of linguistic modes in the plays.

Furthermore, there are excerpts from the plays under investigation in which the application language levels have been restricted to a conception of shifts between standard and colloquial forms of the English language. In this analysis we find it better to classify words into two groups: standard, formal on the one hand, colloquial, regional and pidgin on the other hand.

II-1-1- American Colloquial English.

The aims of this subsection are to describe and analyse types of American colloquial English; to exemplify some of their characteristics, and to establish the efficacy of the finished product through the functions of the language strands in the literary works under investigation. This may also mean that there is a notable presence of colloquial English and pidgins in *The Road* and *The Trials of Brother Jero*. In addition, the literary works we work around are placed within the field of drama. The basic means of expression in such a genre is dialogue. In a dialogue, there are people talking. Wole Soyinka's language is a mixture of standard, colloquial and pidgin English. To deal with the latter category of language we emphasize the variety of the linguistic strands in the plays under consideration. We mention them as being American colloquial English, simplified English, Nigerian Pidgin English and Yoruba.

To begin with the American colloquial English, the illustrative speech in which Wole Soyinka uses this strand is by Say Tokyo Kids. Before mentioning the excerpt, we find it better to write that American colloquial English is characterized by lexical borrowings from American English, and by elision. Say Tokyo Kids said: "A swell dame is gonna die on the road just so the next passenger kin smear her head in yam porrage? "

The description and the analysis of this illustration actually present borrowing from American English ("swell" and "dame"). There is also an elision ("gonna") for going to, where the 'I' and 'g' in *going* are elided in connected speech and the 'to'

reduced out of existence through the retrogressive absorption of the 't' in 'to' to the 'n' in going.

The excerpt in which Wole Soyinka uses *gonna* works with the third person singular, that is the subject adjectival phrase '*a swell dame*'. The use of *gonna* with the first, the second person singular and plural may also be correct in the affirmative statements. In the interrogative form, 'are' is omitted in the second person singular and first and second person plural. *Gonna* expresses the going to form of the future. In the excerpt under consideration *gonna* has become a sort of modal auxiliary verb in the use of colloquial English to the extent that this necessarily calls for the use of a main verb. We also note that the word stress in this expression is on the first syllable. In addition, apart from *gonna* which is colloquial English in the part of the text we consider, there are other colloquialism such as: *swell* and *dame*. The first, *swell* is used as an adjective that means very good, and cool, sweet, bitchin, great, generally in response to a question. The second is *dame*. It is a common noun which means female, woman. We understand that '*A swell dame is gonna die...*' means a very good woman is going to die.

Say Tokyo Kid's American colloquial English comes to exercise an influence over the speech of his interlocutors on the death of a woman. Kotonu's 'yeah, I suppose so' is the response to Say Tokyo Kid's timber speech.

In this analysis we give an interpretation of what the death of a very good and beautiful woman represents for Say Tokyo Kid. In fact, before his feeling on the woman's death, Say Tokyo Kid considers the tense form of the statement and the woman's identity he Kids is talking about. To begin with the tense form, it is 'going to', used to talk about something in the future which we see as a result of something now, and to talk about a planned future action. The structure of the sentence is that of a positive statement, but at the end of the sentence there is a question mark. This reinforces the aspect of colloquial English in the excerpt. As for the woman's identity, it is indefinite because Say Tokyo Kid uses 'a' in front of '*swell dame*'. He says '*a swell dame is gonna die...*'. Say Tokyo Kid does not name the woman he is talking about because he may not know her name, and the full identity, that is also the personality of the woman.

This expression is actually in close relation with the whole action of the play we refer to at this stage of the analysis. It is a complex literary work which depicts a series of interactions between various characters at a motor park community over the course

of a single day. The whole action of the play is about death. *The Road* is characterized by the constant accident described; accidents from which the touts take spare parts, goods that belong to the victims, be them passengers touts or drivers, and sell them to other people. A major accident occurs when a speeding lorry is not sustained on a ‘‘rotten’’ bridge. Nearby apparently is a curve, marked by a sign. It is not said directly that the damaged bridge is concealed by a curve. Rather, the doomed kola-nut lorry makes a sudden halt in time to avoid the partially destroyed bridge. The sudden halt could- but not imply an associated curve.

Say Tokyo Kid is a timber –truck driver. He is a captain of thugs. We meet him when a politician namely Chief – in- Town comes looking for thugs to hire. Those thugs available for political use are led by Say Tokyo Kid. Later we hear Say Tokyo Kid discuss his personal philosophy. Then the thugs have an accident, and Say Tokyo Kid is abandoned in the bush by his terrified men who do not realize he is still alive.

To reconsider the American colloquial English spoken by Say Tokyo Kid when he sees an accident, that is ‘‘*A swell dame is gonna die just so the next passenger kin smear her head in yam porrage?*’’, we write that Say Tokyo Kid loves a woman who is about to die because he admires her. However, he also hates that woman to the extent that he does save the woman during the accident. This situation makes Say Tokyo Kid the character who loves and hates the same persons or the same things.

In *The Road* there are other uses of American colloquial English in which we see Say Tokyo Kid’s love and hate practice. The instance of illustration is

I mean, a man has gotta his pride. I don’t carry no timber that ain’t one hundred per cent. fit. I’m a guy of principles. Carrying timber ain’t the same carrying passengers I tell you. You carry any kind of guy. You take any kind of load You carrying rubbish. You carrying lepers. The woman tell you to stop because they’s feeling the call of nature. If you don’t stop they pee in your lorry. And whether you stop or not their chirren mess the place all over. The whole of the lorry is stinking from rotting food and all kinda refuse . That’s a passenger lorry. ¹⁰⁰

In the excerpt mentioned above, there are brands of American English characterised by other lexical borrowings from American English (‘‘*timber*’’, ‘‘*guy*’’ and ‘‘*pee*’’), and by elision (‘‘*gotta*’’ ‘‘*ain’t*’’, ‘‘*chirren*’’ and ‘‘*kinda*’’). To begin with ‘‘*timber*’’, it means the wood prepared for use in building. Next, the word ‘‘*guy*’’ signifies boy, ‘‘*guy*’’ is usually used to address a male. But ‘‘*guys*’’ which is into

¹⁰⁰ Wole Soyinka, ‘‘The Road’’ *Collected Plays I*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1973), p.171.

plural, can be used to address a group of male and female persons. Then, the word ‘*pee*’ is another way to say to visit the bathroom, to urinate or to defecate. This is the language used when talking to children or in the absence of children. In addition, plain old go ‘*pee*’ is fine to use around children and is used among family members or close friends of any age. As for elisions, ‘*gotta*’ is used in a similar way with *gonna* and *wanna* to signify got to, in this case the use shows the conversational pronunciation of have got to, or as informal alternatives to have to or must. It is not so much used in the interrogative. The second elision on the list is ‘*ain’t*’. It is used for negative third person singular American colloquial contraction, a single word that is equivalent to other words such as: am not, ‘is not’ and ‘are not’, ‘has not’, and ‘have not’ most likely originated in the Southern States of America as it flows easily with their accent but is now used in many places around the world. This form of American colloquial English, that is say ‘*ain’t*’ may have fallen from favour now, but John Bartlett reminds us that in 1848 ‘*ain’t*’/ ‘*an’t*’ was a common abbreviation in colloquial language for am not and are not. In some dialects ‘*ain’t*’ is also used as a contraction of ‘do not’, ‘does not’, and ‘did not’. Then it was wrong when it was used for ‘is not’. In addition, ‘*ain’t*’ is actually an elision because it is a contraction, which may also mean a shortened form.

This contraction of negated auxiliary verb is achieved by suffixing ‘-n’t’, that is an abbreviation form of ‘not’, to the root of a verb with or without changes to the root. Indeed, ‘*ain’t*’ is formed by reducing the negative grammatical particle not to n’t, a suffix which is fused to the root of the verb.

In colloquial English, the form ‘*ain’t*’ has particular prominence. In addition, ‘*chirren*’ is the plural noun used for children, chiefly in the Southern United States of America. The linguistic process of ellipsis allows for the deletion within words of some internal sounds, such as weakly stressed syllables and less prominent consonants. This process caused Old English to become Modern English. Ellipsis is still an active process in American regional dialects.¹⁰¹ In ‘*chirren*’, both the (*l*) and the (*d*) of children are omitted in favour of the more conspicuous (*r*). Last not least, ‘*kinda*’ is an American colloquialism used to mean some kind of. In this word we realize that the (*of*) is deleted in favour of (*a*).

¹⁰¹ www.seadict.com/en/en/chirren.

Say Tokyo Kid actually loves and hates the passengers, loads he carries in his lorry. He addresses the world of lorry drivers. All that he tells them is his contempt for passengers. He is proud of being a driver and captain of thugs. He has such a principle that he carries the lorry on the condition that it must be filled with passengers and any kind of luggage, even that which is or is to be, thrown away as worthless. In addition, the categories of passengers mentioned by Say Tokyo Kid are lepers, persons suffering from a skin disease that slowly eats into the body and forms silvery scales on the skin, women who all the times asks the driver to stop because they must urinate, and when the driver does not stop women discharge their urine in the lorry, women children who move from one place to another in the lorry. So, the faults of women, their haggling over fares, their fears of speed, and incessant tongues, led Say Tokyo Kid to find refuse in the forest. He ends his speech by saying that the whole of the lorry is stinking from rotting food and all kind of refuse.

As we suggest it above this situation of love, affection and hate the same person or thing at the same time integrates the reality of the physical road that is a prepared way, publicly or privately owned, between places for use of pedestrians, riders, vehicles, etc. The action of *The Road* describes violent death and the fact that death is inevitable for users of the road.

In connection with loving and hating the same person or the same thing at the same time practised by Say Tokyo Kid, *The Bible* writes ‘Then Amnon hated her exceedingly; so that the hate wherewith he hated her [was] greater than the love wherewith he had loved her’.

Additionally, in his ‘Hating the one you love- I Hate you, but I love you’ Dr. Aron Ben-Zeen describes:

Many testimonies, as well as fictional works describe situations in which people find themselves hating the person they love. This might initially appear to be contradiction, for how can one love and hate the same person at the same time? A discussion of this problem requires making a distinction between logical consistency and psychological compatibility. Hating the one you love may be a consistent experience, but it raises difficulties concerning its psychological compatibility. Love and hate are often described to be diametrically opposed; in this case, it is impossible to speak about hating the one we love without engaging in a logical contradiction. Two major arguments can be raised against this description. First, love is broader in scope than is hate, as it refers to more features of the object. Thus while in hate the object is considered to be basically a bad agent, in romance love the object is perceived to be both good and attractive. Second, there are many varieties of each emotion (there are more kind of love than of hate), and each kind cannot be the exact opposite of all other kinds of the other emotion. Love and hate are distinct rather than opposed experiences: they are similar in certain aspects dissimilar in others. In light of the complex nature of the love and hate, it is plausible that

when people describe their relationship as love-hate relationship, they may be referring to different features of each experience.¹⁰²

The main ideas in the above citation are hating and loving a person, something at the same time, which is contradictory; this raises psychological incompatibility, love and hate are diametrically opposed, love is broader in scope than is hate. In hate, the object is considered to be basically a bad agent, in romance love the object is perceived to be good and attractive, love and hate have a complex nature.

In addition this description of love and hate feeling or practice from Say Tokyo Kid is linked to the constraint of her work. As we mentioned it earlier, he is a driver and captain of thugs. He drives timber. The practice of his job is on the road, and this is the place for accidents leading to death. Death does not make any restriction. That, drivers, touts, passengers, all of them users of the road may die. In relation to this fact, it is understandable that jobs exercise an influence on those who are specialised in, be good or bad.

The reality of the road in the play is associated with recurrent mortal accident. This is actually due to the fact that the road is not built as expected, that is to say according to norms and principles on the one hand, to lorries' owners cruel ambition demanding sacrifice, to the wrong and inappropriate use of road signs by the competent authorities, and to the drivers' attitudes of speed when driving on the road on the other hand. This is obvious when we consider what we have written earlier, that is to say, the curve and the bridge are associated with the rotten bridge. The terror of that was not the result of neglect, but the result of senseless mind of the officials: "the genius of a road engineer has gone and built an island in the middle of that bend just before the bridge." Worse, "a concrete pillar guards it at either end." The pillar was the object that caught motorists coming around the bend, and what enraged Wole Soyinka was that as often as the pillar was destroyed it was not replaced as an "unmistakable warning of the narrow bridge 'ahead. Soyinka asked, 'Has the repeated evidence of the island not persuaded the fool engineer that warnings are no good to dead men?'"

Wole Soyinka feels interest in the fact that living people should willingly be victimized by official fools. In its capacity to murder the road waits like a spider for

¹⁰² Aaron Ben-Zeev, Hating the one you Love "I hate you, but I love you", 2008, <http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/in-the-name-love/200804/hating-the-one-you-love-i-hate-you-i-love-you> (March 2015).

its victims. To this effect, the road is an aspect of the god Ogun, who demands sacrifice – if not a dog, then people.

Furthermore, apart from the excerpt above in which Wole Soyinka uses American colloquialisms, there are many others in *The Road*. They are all said by Say Tokyo Kid. To begin with ‘ain’t’, he addresses Salubi in the following terms ‘I ain’t late am I?’. To Professor he says ‘I reckon this has gone too far. I ain’t scared like all these people so I’m telling you, you are fooling around where you ain’t got no businessI’m Say Tokyo Kid and I don’t give you one damn!’ He later on adds ‘I ain’t afraid. Even if he’s master of the spirits of every timber I ever wrestled with, I can teach him a lesson. ‘In addition to that, Say Tokyo Kid says:

So what? So long his guy keeps bringing that swell froth on every gourd. I’m gonna come here to pay ma respects. But a don’ go for no ceremony About’ it. A don’t mind his crazy talk, but all the rest of it, man, it ain’t for Say Tokyo Kid.¹⁰³

The other excerpts we consider are those in which Say Tokyo Kid talks to Samson. He says: ‘...if you ain’t gorra strong head kid, you can’t drive no guy of timber’, ‘I ain’t going with no one unless with ma own guy of timber’.

When we try to read carefully the passages above from *The Road*, the essential fact is that, Say Tokyo Kid’s uses of ‘ain’t’ works as the expression of his courage, lack of fear, and strength; all these qualities result from the fact that marijuana is of course the delight of Say Tokyo Kid and his fellow layabouts in *The Road*.

What we have just written is clear in the following stage direction

*[Say Tokyo Kid reaches out a stick of weed to him which he accepts behind his back. Darts back to the door and sits apart sniffing the weed. He gives a quick nod of appreciation to Say Tokyo Kid who graciously waves it aside. One of his thugs picks up drum and taps out a slow rhythm. Say Tokyo, his eyes shining madly, leaps up. Lights up Joe’s cigarette. Say Tokyo slowly flexes his arm muscles, looking from one arm to the other, luxuriating in the feel of his strength.]*¹⁰⁴ (my emphasis)

The excerpt selected above actually describes Say Tokyo Kid’s personal and professional identity that is the most colourful in *The Road* because it synthesises values and discourses of American colloquial English and the subculture of smokers in the criminal underworld of petty felons and thugs.

¹⁰³ Wole Soyinka, ‘The Road’ in *Collected Plays 1*, op. cit. p. 170.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid. p. 170.

Then, Say Tokyo Kid uses ‘gorra’, ‘gonna’, ‘wanna’, ‘wanra’ in his most memorable act of verbal self-presentation in the play:

Thug: Son of timber!

Say T.: That me kid. A guy is gorra have his principle. I’m a right guy. I mean you just look arrit this way. If you gonna be killed by a car, you wanna be killed by a Volkswagen. You wanna Limousine, a Ponriac or something like that. Well thas my principle. Suppose you was to come and find me in the ditch on day with one of them timber guys on my back. Now it ain’t gonna be a disgrace if the guy was some kinda cheap, wretched firewood full of ants and borers. So when I carry a guy of timber, its gotta be the biggest. One or two. If it’s one, its gotta fill the whole lorry, no room even for the wedge. And high class timber kid. High class. Golden walnut. Obeche. Ironwood. Black Afara. Iroko. Ebony. Camwood. And the heartwood’s gorra be sound. [Thumps his chest.] It’s Gorra have a solid beat like that. Like mahogany.

Thug: No dirty timber!

Say T.: Timber is my line. You show me the wood and I’ll tell you what kinda insects gonna attack it, and I’ll tell how you take the skin off. And I’ll tell you whar kinda spirit is gonna be chasing you when you cut it down. If you ain’t gorra strong head kid, you can’t drive no guy of timber.¹⁰⁵

Through the use of American colloquial English Say Tokyo Kid keeps on expressing his fierce professional pride in his job as a driver of timber—hauling lorries. The moral code by which he lives is compounded out of the source and model we mention above, that is to say the subculture of marijuana smokers, and is thus like a pastiche of half-digested ideas. Say Tokyo Kid’s identity revolves around his professional pride as a driver of lorries, but to this is added his open practice of cannibalizing every commodity from road crashes and their victims, even if these victims are acquaintances or professional colleagues.

In another excerpt Say Tokyo Kid uses the same type of American colloquial English, that is to say ‘gonna’.

Say T.: [spits.]: That’s what would happen if your Professor came in. I don give a damn for that crazy guy and he know it. He’s an awright guy but he sure act crasy sometimes and I’m telling you, one of these days, he’s gonna go too far.

A Thug: The Captain!

Say T.: I’m Say Tokyo Kid and I fear no son of man.¹⁰⁶

In this text, Say Tokyo Kid considers Professor as an outsider and a person who is concerned with things he does not fully understand. He describes himself as a timber—spirit, which could be regarded as part of his general bravado. It is clear that the group

¹⁰⁵ Wole Soyinka, “The Road” in *Collected Plays 1*, op. cit. p. 172.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid. p. 170.

of thugs view him as leader. In that fundamentally transgressive character of postcolonial discourse and identity, Say Tokyo Kid can legitimately be a violent thug.

Next, the other forms of American colloquial English that Say Tokyo Kid speaks in the play are ‘we’ r gerring’, ‘Heh, wairamminute wairamminute...’, ‘yeah sure...to finrout’. The first form ‘we’ r gerring’ is read in Say Tokyo Kid’s address to the Thug because Professor has just compared Murano who he thinks, has the spirit of a god in him, and is not positively like them whose faces are equally blank but share no purpose with the Word.

Say T.: Come on, service me the stuff. [He gives one of his men the cup.] And hurry up cause lak a said, we’ r gerring out of this joint soon. I don’ re reckon on staying long in re same place as that Professor guy.¹⁰⁷

In this excerpt Say Tokyo Kid expresses his strong belief to be free from Professor together with the other Thugs. They very soon dislocated with Professor whom they consider stay at the same place. In addition, this passage shows the ill-relationships between a band of thugs, would-be lorry drivers, layabouts who construct a shantytown near a used motor parts store, and Professor who presides over this store, and searches for auto parts from wreckages emanating from accidents.

We may also add that the idea of dislocation, separation, division between Say Tokyo Kid and Professor expresses through the American colloquial term ‘we’ r gerring out’ is reinforced by the word ‘joint’. This means that Say Tokyo Kid works first of all for both Professor, and then with Chief-in-Town. As he could no longer work for both of them, he gets out of Professor whom he considers as a source of failure, and danger for him. In fact, when the thugs have an accident, Say Tokyo Kid is abandoned in the bush by his terrified men who do not realize he is still alive. Later, he resurfaces, pouring contempt on his men, and in the final scene Say Tokyo Kid is the one who resists him. The other possible interpretation we make here is that, there is a conflict between the young man named Say Tokyo Kid and the old man Professor. He then inadvertently kills Professor.

After that, we deal with ‘Hey, wairamminute wairamminute ...’.

The morphologic description of this American colloquial English presents the elision of the consonant ‘t’ which is replaced by another ‘r’ at the end of the word ‘wait’,

¹⁰⁷ Ibid. p. 224.

and with the preposition ‘a’ followed by the word ‘minute’, the whole sentence is written as a single word. As for the semantic dimension of this form of the American colloquial English, it is the expression of surprise and panic by Say Tokyo Kid to what he hears from Particulars Joe that is his acceptance of mutual assistance to Professor because he is a humble man and very approachable. The characters involved in the part of the play are: Professor, Particulars Joe, Say Tokyo Kid and Samson.

Prof.: Not you. Your friend. But I thank all who hasten the Redeeming of the Word. You are important I promise you. Everyone here is important. Your lives whittle down the last Obstacle to the hidden Word.

Partic. Joe [turning back sheets in his notebook.]: In this case sir, perhaps we will be of mutual assistance to each other. Our investigations indicates that the man who was possessed at the Festival of Drivers was a palm wine tapper by trade. The coincidence involved will be of great interest to my bosses, but I am, as you know sir, a humble man and very approachable.

Say T.: Hey, wairamminute wairamminute...

Samson: Kotonu, did you hear that?

Partic. Joe: Professor sir, have you anything to say?

Prof.: Remember my warning. Be careful I said. Be careful. If my enemies trouble me I shall counter with resurrection. Capital R. I shall set up shop in full opposition-I have the advantage.¹⁰⁸

The quotation we have just mentioned, mainly the declaration of Say Tokyo Kid is an attempt to stop Professor’s ‘sacrilege’. This is appropriate to the extent that it is a muddle of panic which serves to highlight complicity between Professor and Particulars Joe. In addition, Professor’s aims are exclusively egocentric because his search for the death is an individual; it sacrifices the lives of the others, including that of Say Tokyo Kid for his own benefits. As a consequence, by stopping Professor Say Tokyo Kid protects his own life and that of his followers.

Last but not least, Say Tokyo Kid says ‘‘ Yeah sure. And none of you cares to finrout what become of your Cap’n.’’ The form of the American colloquial we are concerned with in this excerpt is ‘finrout’. Its morphologic description presents the elision of the consonant ‘d’ at the end of the verb ‘find’. This consonant ‘d’ is replaced by ‘r’, followed by the preposition ‘out’. The verb and the preposition are written, pronounced single word. This American colloquial phrasal verb is in the context of Say Tokyo Kid’s feeling of being abandoned under the lorry which makes an accident by his thugs. Say Tokyo Kid is the captain of thugs. He recruits them for Chief –in Town. He experiences the so-called non-assistance of a person in danger.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid. p. 221.

From the reality of the road described in the play we understand that drivers and their apprentices, passengers, touts have all been exposed to death.

The use of American colloquial English in *The Road* is actually associated with aesthetics. The dimension through which this is justifiable is culture. After the morphologic description of the American colloquial English used by Say Tokyo Kid in *The Road*, we try to elaborate more a bit on the reason why Wole Soyinka deploys such category of the English language in his work. In fact, of all the characters Say Tokyo Kid is the only character who has stylized brand of American colloquial English. To mention it again, Say Tokyo Kid is the captain of thugs. He recruits them for Chief –in Town.

In this description we examine the relationship of characters associated with the deployment of a linguistic ladder of the American colloquial English. What we want to point out is the fact that Say Tokyo Kid addresses his interlocutors namely Professor, Kotonu, Samson, Salubi, Particular Joe, etc. in American colloquial English. Professor is the talkative character who sustains him above his fellows; Kotonu is a driver, he works with Samson who is a tout for ‘‘No Danger, No Delay’’ lorry service; Salubi is a driver trainee; Particular Joe is a cop who always wants the ‘‘particulars’’ of the case. Those interlocutors in turn do not reply in American colloquial English. They respectively speak Standard English and the other forms of Englishes. The choice of the American colloquial English by Say Tokyo Kid is a particularity for him. Say Tokyo Kid’s speeches are somewhat intimidated and hostile. This choice fits his job that is a captain of thugs, even though those thugs do not express their feelings, thoughts in the American colloquial English.

In addition, the use of the American colloquial English works very well with marijuana addiction that Say Tokyo Kid is found of. Moreover, when Say Tokyo Kid chooses the American colloquial English this means that he rejects the standard English and the other Englishes that his interlocutors speak. Beyond this interpretation, we think that Wole Soyinka wants to his possible readers consider the American literary source *The Road*, first of all; then the presence of American culture in the play under scrutiny; next, Wole Soyinka’s double and multi-cultural heritage thanks to important formations of European modernism; last, Nigerian’s openmindedness to universal culture. Biodun Jeifo’s words illustrate the interpretation we have made on the reason why Wole Soyinka uses the American colloquial English in *The Road*:

Concretely, I explore two distinct but complementary paradigms by which Wole Soyinka in his fictional and nonfictional works has sought to negotiate the great tension between the two sides of the problem. The first of these is the paradigm, or arc, of a complexly and subliminally ‘representative’ self whose authority and originality receive their greatest validation from access to the repressed recesses of collective memory, as codified in myths, rituals and cultural matrices. This paradigm, I would argue, provides the textual and ideological base for Soyinka’s great solicitude for the vitality of a collective African cultural and literary modernity. The second paradigm (...) a unique, ‘unrepresentable’ self which locates its (...) identity in the endless chain of signification and the polysemy of language, especially as these are teased and played out in our author’s writings between figures and idioms of both high and low literariness in (...) English. (...) These include the construction of powerful strategies to confront the violence and negations of the social conditions and realities of the most oppressed and marginalized groups in neo-colonial Africa; the creation of distance from and a perspective on his deep immersion in his social and cultural milieu; the invention and finessing of an idealized ‘self’ that tries to combine the full self –presence of classical mimeticism with the putative decentered, contingently predicated subjectivity of poststructuralism; a more or less successful negotiation of the dangers of that extremely narcissistic form of self-absorption which seems to afflict great writers and intellectuals (...) ¹⁰⁹.

The essential aspect in this long quotation by Biodun Jeyifo in relation to that the use of the American colloquial English by Say Tokyo Kid in *The Road* is the great tension between the uniqueness implied in the notion of an autonomous artistic selfhood and the notion of representativeness appertaining to a whole tradition that has indeed been extensively explored in Soyinka’s writings and is at the heart of his project of self-fashioning.

Say Tokyo Kid has eventually achieved a personal understanding of the meaning of the Word which is founded on the acceptance of the otherness –in its fullness of autonomous being, and in keeping one’s distance and refraining from the limits of the human capacity to identify and apprehend fully the nature and meaning of being. Say Tokyo Kid is alienated from an authentic African identity and culture. This is signified by his urban American colloquial English register. He remains the single most defender in the play of the sanctity of traditional African values.

In addition, Say Tokyo Kid can be viewed as being in the category of radical positive form of hybrid identity that he employs strategically in order to assert a deeper authenticity that is based not on a simple opposition between the self and the other, but on a more profound apprehension of the essential distinction and particularity of the indigenous and, as Soyinka put it, its complementarity with the seemingly antagonistic other. We laid the emphasis on the fact that through the use of American colloquial English by Say Tokyo Kid in *The Road*, Wole Soyinka demonstrates that the idea of

¹⁰⁹ Biodun Jeyifo, *Wole Soyinka: Politics, Poetics and Postcolonialism*, op. cit. p. 22.

transforming the antithetical other into the synthesis of the same is replaced by the principle of an intensely contestatory, but peaceful logic of coexistence of the self and the other . To sum up, Say Tokyo Kid speaks different types of American colloquial English. This category of language which is not the official language in Nigeria, a former British colony fulfils utile functions. This is the language of cultural conflict between traditional African society, the American influenced road – culture of the trucks drivers, and the colonial culture symbolised by the Anglican Church overlooking the motor-park. This conflict is reflected visually in the contrast between the African masks, Say Tokyo Kid's cowboy outfit and Professor's conservative Victorian garb. We emphasise Say Tokyo Kid's individual stylistic creativity; we say that the belief and the promotion of the African cultural identity is not the exclusivity of the intellectuals alone. All social classes are involved in the struggle. However, British intellectuals are defenders of their own culture, be them in Great Britain or in their former colonies. Beyond these facts, the argument that British and American literary English still provide standards for post-colonial is becoming unpopular , and many writers struggle to achieve an easy compromise in arguing that in using English to express their experience they do not commit cultural treason but modify and enrich the English language. This point is granted by Richard W. Bailey, a linguist and pioneer researcher in the subdiscipline of English as a World language:

Postcolonial societies can achieve linguistic independence within the anglophone world by seizing the means of expression from inter- national norms and forging it to serve local national purposes.¹¹⁰

At this level of the work we agree with the fact that there is similarity between Wole Soyinka's *The Road* and William Shakespeare's *The Tempest* to the extent that the second scene of the first act of this play is often read as a parable on the colonial situation, with Caliban representing the native done out of his inheritance and Prospero standing for the coloniser establishing his regime through persuasion and open force. For writers from Africa who express themselves in English rather than their native languages, Caliban's remonstrance with Miranda may ring especially true: "You

¹¹⁰ Richard B. Bailey, (1991), cited by Mpalive Hangson Msiska , Postcolonial Identity in Wole Soyinka Editions Rodopi B.V, New York, 2007, p. 173.

taught me language, and my profit on't Is, I know how to curse. The red plague rid you for learning me your language!’’¹¹¹

What is essential in the citation above is the fact that with the language he learned from the coloniser (the language which provides him with the way and the power to voice out his thirst for liberation), Caliban limits their domination, and chases them away; the same way Say Tokyo Kid who stands for the native in *The Road* uses the American colloquial English to defend his cultural identity.

II-1-2- Simplified English.

The global spread of the English language as one of the far-reaching linguistic phenomena of our time is already an established fact. Variation and change can be seen through such designations as world Englishes, new Englishes, modern Englishes, South African English, Australian English, Indian English, West African Englishes. To mention just a few. The last variation on the list above is West African English, and the phrase Nigerian English is associated with this phrase. The main concern in this subsection is to assess the existence of distinct varieties of English known as simplified English and Nigerian Pidgin English. Some of the issues explored include the following aspects: its main identifying characteristics as well as its uses. The identification of simplified and Nigerian Pidgin English is followed by what may be called the original or the standard form of the language, when possible.

The variations called simplified English and Nigerian Pidgin English are linked to Nigerian English. They are the result of the global spread of English that began with British colonialism during the nineteenth century.

Simplified English is a simplified version of the Standard English. It was developed to facilitate the understanding of English to non-native speakers of English. Simplified works in such a way as: it starts with a lexicon of approved words, each word can be used as part of speech, and words can only be used with the approved meaning. In addition, a brief consideration of the sphere of reference of the term pidgin will provide us with a framework for evaluating Nigerian pidgin English. Several definitions of pidgin have been proposed : - a form of speech that usually has a simplified grammar and limited, often mixed, vocabulary and is used principally for

¹¹¹ William Shakespeare, *The Tempest* (No Fear Shakespeare) by SparkNotes Editors (2003), p. 17.

intergroup communication (*Webster's Third International Dictionary* 1961: 1712), - a language which has arisen as the result of contact between peoples of different languages, usually formed from mixing the languages (UNESCO 1963 : 46), - a language whose vocabulary is mainly provided by the language spoken by the upper stratum to the grammar and morphology of their original language (Adlar 1977: 12), - a contact vernacular ... characterized by a limited vocabulary, an elimination of many grammatical devices such as number and gender, and a drastic reduction of redundant features (Camp 1971: 15), - a marginal language which arises to fulfil certain restricted communication needs among people who have no common language (Todd 1971:1). Nigerian Pidgin English generally shows evidence of lexical borrowing from Yoruba language. Nigerian Pidgin English, Mafeni claims (95), is a lingua franca for some and a mother tongue (hence, a creole) for others; either way it has transcended its original function as a trade language. This definition is a limited one as it makes a restriction to the use of pidgin English because pidgin is an appropriate designation for the speech of those for whom it has become a mother tongue, be them traders or not. Simplified English and Nigerian Pidgin English have much in common, and it is in practice difficult to distinguish the two in a speech.

The plays under scrutiny in which we find indications of simplified English and Nigerian Pidgin English are *The Road* and *The Trials of Brother Jero*.

To begin with simplified English, it is exemplified by the speech of Salubi and Samson. Salubi says ‘‘ I take uniform impress all future employer. (152)

In Standard English he should say ‘‘I will impress all future employers with that uniform‘‘. Salubi’s speech actually illustrates the type of simplified English. The reason for this is that, determiners like articles (both definite and indefinite) are omitted (‘‘take uniform, ‘‘where the determiner might have been a , the , or a deictic like this), verbs are generally uninflected (‘‘ take, ‘‘ an invariant simple present form, replaces the aorist took or the perfect have taken; the infinitive in to impress is omitted), and number agreement is dispensed with (‘‘employer’’ for employers, the plural morpheme –s being omitted). In the excerpt under consideration, simplified English typically exploits the redundancy of the language by discarding the information that is not necessary; since ‘‘all’’ conveys plurality, the plural marker on ‘‘employer’’ is redundant and may be eliminated. Salubi’s speech that we have just considered is

therefore made shorter through the omission of grammatical words, and it focuses on lexis as a conveyor of essential meaning.

Apart from the excerpt we have dealt with above, there are many others in which the characters speak simplified English structured in the same way.

The first is ‘‘I know I not get job, but I get uniform. ‘’ (Salubi, 152)

In Standard English we write ‘‘ I know I don’t have any job, but I have the uniform.’’

The second is ‘‘Why you no mind your own business for heaven’s sake! (Salubi, 153)

He should say ‘‘Why don’t you mind your own business for heaven’s sake?’’

The third is ‘‘He get experience pass me?’’ Salubi, 154)

The correct structure is ‘‘Is he more experienced than me? ‘’

The fourth is ‘‘The man too clever ‘’ (Salubi, 154)

In Standard English he should say ‘‘ This man is too clever.’’

The fifth is ‘‘Which kind police? ‘’ (Salubi, 154)

Without omission the structure would be ‘‘ Which kind of police?’’

The sixth is ‘‘ It [your mouth] stinks so much that I will promote you Captain of my private bodyguard. (Samson, 156)

The above examples indicate, respectively the position of the invariant negative particle ‘‘no’’ before the main verb ‘‘get’’, a lack of ‘‘do ‘’- support in the formation of both negatives in the first line, and questions in the second line, - ‘‘ Why you no mind’’ for ‘‘Why don’t you mind ?’’; Yes –No and rhetorical question formation through intonation rather than through inversion –‘‘He get experience ‘‘Does he [have] experience in the third line; frequent omission of the copula –‘‘The man too ‘’ for ‘‘The man is too clever ‘’ in the fourth line; frequent omission of the preposition ‘‘of’’ in Wh – question formation - ‘‘Which kind police? ‘’ for ‘‘which kind of police? in the fifth line; and omission of preposition to obligatory before indirect objects after such verbs as promote (‘‘ I will promote you to Captain ‘’ for ‘‘I will promote you to Captain ‘’ in the sixth line.

Furthermore we say a little about the function of simplified English in the speeches above. We write that simplified English is used by the unemployed characters touts and truck drivers: Salubi, Samson etc., around Professor who is the proprietor of the Aksident Store to express freely their state of unemployment they have been facing,

and their strong belief in change for better conditions of life. They will find job, and have much money, marry ten wives. The way change will come is something important to elaborate a bit more. In fact, they do not create their own jobs, but they expect Professor who represents the Western world to forge them the driver license that will help them to have good jobs. In *The Road* forgery consists in altering the photograph that appears on the driving license. This means that Professor counterfeits the driving license already issued by a governmental agency. In relation to this, the identity of Professor is controversial. The illustration to this is the way Professor is described in the article ‘Tracking the Road of Subalternity in Wole Soyinka’s Play *The Road*:

Professor, like the colonizers, has a sense of contempt for the natives or lower classes ‘‘If you think I do this [providing shelter for the unemployed] from the kindness of my heart you are fools.’’ He uses all his intellectual resources in order to make money. He charges the illiterate exorbitant ‘‘Consultation fees ‘’, even when they want to discuss a problem. Like the very colonizers, he justifies his illegal activities as a solution, a compensation, a redress, a balance of inequalities ‘’ and ignores its fatal ramifications. Professor is a sort of amphibian creature, neither African nor European. ¹¹²

The attitude of Salubi and Samson when waiting for the job can be described as that of people drinking palm-wine and sleeping. The following words are illustrative:

The Road is ‘‘a play which satisfies our sense of dramatic rightness’’. It is a play about a day in the strange life of a group of drivers in Nigerian road. Their aimless existence, waiting for jobs, drinking, sleeping, dreaming of an exciting future is dominated by the obscure but powerful presence of Professor. ¹¹³

In addition, before getting this document, Salubi starts wearing the driver’s uniform that he buys himself with his own money. He could not wait until he gets a genuine driver license. Samson notices that Salubi’s uniform is not cleaned. It is second-hand, and he looks at the blood-stain on the uniform. The state of Salubi’s uniform makes us think that the uniform belonged to a victim of road accident, stolen and sold again in the Aksident Store or elsewhere. The except of the play we refer to actually presents an aesthetic feature. In fact, at the beginning of the play we see the presence of the object that is the blood-stained uniform which results from the road accident at the

¹¹² <http://jyoshe.blogspot.com.es/2012/09/tracking-road-of-subalternity-in-wole.html#.VJHiRHtSLLA> (March 2015).

¹¹³ <http://www.languageinindia.com/jan2012/manjulasongsofsoyinka.pdf> (March 2015).

bridge, the event which is described in the second part of the play. The blood-stained uniform may represent the consequence and the accident is the event.

To this respect, the result comes before the event. This is part of Wole Soyinka's aesthetic features. It is associated with the relation between the past, the present and the future that can also be read as it follows: future, present and past. Thanks to this dramatic technique, Wole Soyinka wants to write that the present of Africa reflects its future. This may also mean that the present realities of Africa will influence the future. The present predicates on the future. The same way the future of Africa is to be seen in the present.

In *The Road*, Wole Soyinka depicts the reality of postcolonial Nigeria at levels of social conditions and politics. Simplified English functions as the free expression of Nigerians' subalternity to the colonizers. The reduction observed in simplified English means the reduction of Nigerians' personality. In other words, simplified English expresses the inferiority of Nigerians to the Europeans, and their passivity, be them ordinary people, intellectuals or politicians. That is the essence of the following words:

Satirical denunciation of bad leadership in Nigeria does not spare the academia. There is a seeming consensus in post-independence Nigerian writings that the intellectuals would do greater damage to the nation than any other political class if allowed to rule. (...) Corruption, mismanagement (...) exist in public and private sectors of the society (...) Professor is obsessed with the idea of the essence of death, while the nation demands urgent solutions to unemployment, road accidents and thuggery. ¹¹⁴

The citation we have mentioned shows that, in post-colonial Nigeria political leaders did not succeed in ruling the country for the benefit of the people. The latter were facing the problem of unemployment with acuity. They remained passive: waiting, drinking and sleeping instead of trying to create their jobs. In his introduction, Omano Edigheji writes that:

The history of the post-independent African state is that of monumental democratic and developmental failures (...) After almost four and a half decades of independence, most countries on the continent are characterized by unemployment. The evidence for this state of underdevelopment can be found in any social and economic indicators one cares to examine. (...) At the economic level, Africa has been marked by (...) high unemployment and the informalisation of the economies where the majority of its people live in poverty. ¹¹⁵

¹¹⁴ Ayo Kehinde, "Post-Independence Nigerian Literature and the Quest for True Political Leadership for the Nation", in *Journal Sustainable Development in Africa*, Volume 10, No. 2, 2008, p. 348.

¹¹⁵ Omano Edigheji, "A Development State in Africa? A Concept Paper", Research Repoter 105, May 2005, Centre for Policy Studies, p. 5.

The evidence we have just written points out the crucial problem of lack of jobs for Nigerians after the country's independence. This justifies the state of underdevelopment of post-colonial Nigeria. In the last part of the citation, it is written that Nigerians have been working in informal sectors of economy only. And in the play under consideration that sector is road transportation.

Furthermore, apart from the lines in simplified English and its functions, there are excerpts from the play in which characters speak both standard, simplified and Pidgin English at the same time. We mean that, in their addresses characters use two and more than two registers. The characters who shift from one code to another are thugs, touts and demoted drivers in Soyinka's *The Road*. They handle them with equal ease. The shift from one to another is, in the best of circumstances, smooth and carefully controlled, and rests with the locutor's conscious decision. The linguistic phenomenon we evoke here is literary code-switching. It is defined as the use of two or more linguistic variations in the same interaction in literature¹¹⁶. Code-switching is best observable in stage dialogue.

In Part One, Samson switches code from agrammatical, simplified, substandard English to Nigerian Pidgin English, which Salubi acknowledges by reciprocating in the use of the new code. But Samson immediately switches back to formal English, thereby redefining the interaction in the power arena.

Samson: Me a jobless tout? May I ask what you are?

Salubi: A uniformed private driver-temporary unemploy. [Straightens his outfit.]

Samson: God almighty! You dey like monkey wey stoway inside sailor suit. Salubi: Na common jealousy dey do you. I know I no get job, but I get Uniform. [Starts to shine his brass buttons.]

Samson [shakes his head.]: Instead of using all that labour to shine your buttons you should spare some for your teeth, you know, and your body –a little soap and sponge would do it. (...) White coat deserves white teeth.

Salubi [desperately.]: Wes matter? Na me you take dream last night or na wetin? Why you no mind your own business for heaven's sake!

Samson: Because I have no business to mind you dirty pig. Why am I sitting here at this time of the morning? Every self-respecting tout is already in the motor park badgering passengers. Look at all these touts still sleeping. They have no pride in their job. Part-time burglar. In any case they are the pestilence of the trade. No professional dignity. Hear them snoring as if their exhaust has dropped off. Now that is what Kotonu expects me to do –start touting for any lorry which happens to come along. Is that the sort of life for the Champion Tout of Motor Parks? ¹¹⁷

¹¹⁶ "Code-switching" by Heather Coffey. www.learnnc.org/lp/pages/4558.

¹¹⁷ Wole Soyinka, "The Road" in *Collected Plays I*, op. cit., pp. 152-3.

Samson's switch to English may therefore be interpreted as a bid authority, which Salubi, by replying, chooses not to acknowledge. The issue that Samson is concerned with is very serious. It is about professional conscience for Salubi and the other touts who, instead of at the motor park, working, are still sleeping. They have no pride and professional dignity for their job. This may also mean that Salubi has got a job, but not a good job. He could no longer keep on working in the informal sector of the economy for his own development.

Later in the mimicry scene, whose staging was inspired by the tradition of Yoruba theatre, Samson plays the role of the plenipotentiary African millionaire, the mock- 'support[er] [of] culture (154), and uses English to match his megalomania, whereas Salubi, in the role of the meek servant and chauffeur, uses pidgin. In addition, Salubi's code-switching from Nigerian Pidgin English to simplified English may signal he relinquishes the levity of pidgin to broach the serious topic of the acquisition of a uniform before getting the job accordingly. Although, some statements in pidgin English may successfully convey the seriousness of a situation.

Furthermore, at the level of vocabulary we read transfers from the local language especially the Yoruba and mostly from the following areas: music, clothing, indigenous foods, traditional religious beliefs, local institutions, flora and fauna, etc. The illustrations are the following, first of all the stage direction from *The Trials of Brother Jero*.

Towards the end of this speech the sound of 'gangan' drums is heard, coming from the side opposite the hut. A boy enters carrying a drum on each shoulder. He walks towards her, drumming. She turns almost at once.¹¹⁸

The second excerpt we take as an illustration is from the play mentioned above. It is also a stage direction, especially the one that opens Scene V of the play.

A man in an elaborate 'agbada' outfit, with long train and a cap is standing right, downstage, with a sheaf of notes in his hand. He is obviously delivering a speech, but we don't hear it. It is undoubtedly a fire-breathing speech.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁸ Wole Soyinka, "The Trials of Brother Jero" in *Collected Plays 2* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974), p. 152.

¹¹⁹ Wole Soyinka, "The Trials of Brother Jero" in *Collected Plays 2*, op. cit., p. 167.

When we consider these two illustrations above, there are instances of direct transfer from the Yoruba language. The technique that Wole Soyinka uses here consists in leaving the Yoruba words between inverted commas to tell the prospective readers that these are direct loans. The word *gangan* in the first excerpt is a type of drum; it also refers to sometimes as the “talking drum,” the latter being itself a coinage. This type of drum is common among the Yoruba and is used to sing the praises of people in accordance with the rhythm of the Yoruba. As for the word *agbada*, it is to the Yoruba what the costume is to the British and Americans. In fact, in Nigeria it has been officially designated the national dress and could be worn on formal occasions, including official government functions, in place of the British –introduced suit.

The third illustrations are from *The Lion and the Jewel*, within the conversation between Sidi and Girl, and in *The Trials of Brother Jero*, especially in Brother Jero’s speech. To begin with *The Lion and the Jewel*,

Sidi: Is that the truth? Swear! Ask Ogun to strike you dead.
 Girl: Ogun strike me dead if I lie. ¹²⁰

As for *The Trials of Brother Jero*, the excerpt is the following:

Jero: I am a Prophet by birth and by inclination [...] I was born a Prophet. My parents found that I was born with Rather thick and long hair. It was said to come right down my Eyes and down to my neck. For them, this was a certain sign That I was born a natural prophet. ¹²¹

What is interesting in the passages we take as illustrations to the use of words in Yoruba vocabulary are religious vocabulary items. In fact, in the first excerpt the name Ogun means the god of iron and of war in Yoruba traditional religion. He is also the patron god of hunters. In relation to this, people should not swear falsely by the name Ogun, otherwise they incur his wrath. Additionally, in the second excerpt of illustration the word which draws our attention is Prophet. In fact, a Prophet here is an example of the enlargement of the meaning. In the text under consideration, the meaning of the word prophet is broader than that of the usual meaning in British or American English. In addition, the Yoruba religious group of people believe that a

¹²⁰ Wole Soyinka, “The Lion and the Jewel” in *Collected Plays 2*, op. cit., p. 11.

¹²¹ Wole Soyinka, “The Trials of Brother Jero” in *Collected Plays 2*, op. cit., p. 145.

child born with long and thick hair is divinely consecrated to be a prophet. In this excerpt, Brother Jero defines and explains why he is a prophet.

Furthermore, in *The Lion and the Jewel* we read words in relation to Yoruba local flora. They are in the stage direction written as it follows:

A clearing on the edge of the market, dominated by an odan tree. It is the village center. The wall of the bush school flanks the stage on right, and a rude window opens on to the stage from the wall. There is a chant of the 'Arithmetic Times' issuing from this window.
122

The excerpt mentioned above is the beginning of Wole Soyinka's *Collected Plays 2*. The word odan tree is in the first sentence of the all. It is, the odan tree, very common in the Yoruba land and most of the tropical Africa. This tree can grow to be very immense and provide shade from the sun on a hot afternoon. The odan tree is just one of several words, name of object loaned from the local flora.

Furthermore, apart from the fields of grammar and vocabulary through which we have just proved the use of simplified and Nigerian Pidgin English, the domain of syntax has also been exploited by Wole Soyinka in some of his plays under scrutiny. We mean that at the syntactic level, he has also excelled. He has used different innovative strategies and structures from Yoruba language. In plain English, there are, in some of Wole Soyinka's plays under analysis, a lot of expressions that are English at the surface but underlying Yoruba language structures. This may also mean that in a certain number of excerpts the vocabulary is English, but the word order is from the Yoruba language. Few of the strategies we think about are reduplication and translation of Yoruba proverbs and sayings.

The following speeches from Wole Soyinka's plays we scrutinize are very illustrative. First of all, in *The Lion and the Jewel* we consider the conversation between Sidi and Baroka.

Sidi: No, but-[but boldness wins.] If the tortoise cannot tumble it does not mean that he can stand.
Baroka: Who knows? Until the finger nails have scraped the dust, no one can tell which insect released his bowels. 123

¹²² Wole Soyinka, "The Lion and the Jewel" in *Collected Plays 2*, op. cit., p. 3.

¹²³ Ibid., p. 39.

The conversation above between Sidi and Baroka is a good example of Yoruba language saying literally translated into English. It is clear that both characters have a good knowledge of Yoruba language generally required to correctly interpret these sayings that have a common occurrence in day to day speech among the Yoruba.

As for the meaning of these translated-sayings from Yoruba to English we write that, the first reveals Sidi's thinking: his courage to accept and encourage Baroka in his attempts to seduce and make her one of his wives. She encourages him because Baroka is a very old man who suffers from impotence. The feeling of acceptance to become Baroka's youngest wife is reinforced by Sidi's declarations "I hope the Bale will not think me forward. But, like everyone, I had thought the Favourite was a gentle woman." She adds "I think" Baroka "will win" her.

The second saying is the expression of Baroka's assurance to be capable of satisfying Sidi as her partner on bed, even by surprise.

The Trials of Brother Jero also contains indications of the syntax influenced by the Yoruba structure. The illustrations are in the dialogue that involves Amope, Chume and Brother Jero.

Amope: Ho! You're mad.
 Chume: Get on the bike.
 Amope: Kill me! Kill me!
 Chume: Don't tempt me, woman!
 Amope: I won't get on that thing unless you kill me first. ¹²⁴
 Chume: This woman will kill me
 Jero: Forgive him, Father, forgive him.
 Chume: All she gave me was abuse, abuse, abuse... ¹²⁵
 Jeroboam: [In fact, there are eggs and there eggs. Same thing
 Prophet. ¹²⁶

In this excerpts there are instances of reduplication if not repetition. Reduplication that is also repetition is observable in Amope's speech "Kill me! Kill me!", in Jero's "Forgive him, Farther, forgive him", and in Chume's speech, that is "All she gave me was abuse, abuse, abuse...". This linguistic strategy fulfils the functions of intensification. This is a common grammatical device in Yoruba language, one of the West African languages. In addition, apart from the function of intensification fulfilled in the reduplicated utterance above, reduplication performs also the function of

¹²⁴ Wole Soyinka, "The Trials of Brother Jero" in *Collected Plays 2*, op. cit., p. 165.

¹²⁵ Ibid., p. 156.

¹²⁶ Ibid., p. 145.

differentiation. It is the case in Jeroboam's speech 'In fact, there are eggs and there are eggs. Same thing with prophets.' In this sentence especially the last part that is 'Same thing with prophets', Jeroboam wants to say 'there are different kinds of prophets-good as well as bad.'

In addition, the same speech by Jeroboam is also a common feature of Nigerian simplified English in which article and other determiners are not used in what, otherwise, should be obligatory syntactic positions in British English. Thus Jeroboam says 'Same with prophets' instead of 'It is the same with prophets.' The reason for this is that the Yoruba language in Nigeria, unlike the English language do not make use of articles, or do not require a determiner in those positions in syntax where British English requires such.

The use of simplified and Nigerian pidgin is actually part of Wole Soyinka's aesthetic features. English is simplified at the levels of grammar, vocabulary and syntax. English is pidginized because the author through his characters uses Yoruba words when they speak English. In addition, sometimes characters shift from standard to simplified and pidgin English. The functions of this aesthetic feature, that is the special language spoken by the characters in the plays, are first of all, for a better understanding and knowledge of their problems when characters who are in the same situation talk in order to improve their lives; however, to characters of different positions, be them social, economic, intellectual, cultural, political, etc. it performs the function of establishing satire, resistance, balance, equality, freedom, welfare for all people.

II-1-3- Nigerian Pidgin English.

Characters in *The Road* and *The Trials of Brother Jero* speak Nigerian Pidgin English very much. In these two plays the characters use more than ninety five Pidgin English phrases to express themselves. Eighty phrases are used in *The Road*, respectively by the characters such as Salubi who uses thirty one phrases, Samson twenty five, Say Tokyo Kid thirteen phrases, the 1st Man, 2nd Man, 3rd Man use seven phrases in Pidgin English. In *The Trials of Brother Jero*, Chume uses fifteen phrases in Pidgin English. We will be analysing them one by one because we think, that is the best way of understanding the phrases. The following are excerpts, as those mentioned

above to reinforce and illustrate the feeling of better and mutual understanding between characters facing the same bad conditions; but they want to free themselves and those maintaining them in unacceptable situations. The long list of excerpts below shows us the nature of Nigerian Pidgin English that characters speak.

In addition, Nigerian Pidgin English phrases in *The Road* and *The Trials of Brother Jero* are mentioned together with their translations, duly for short phrases. Long excerpts in Pidgin English find their translations into correct English in the text because they are helpful in the understanding of those phrases. In addition, names of characters, author of the Pidgin English phrase are indicated together with the page number referring to them, in the play. The original Nigerian pidgin text is followed by its English equivalent in the case of short phrases.

The main concerns in this subsection are: -to locate, identify and select a certain number of Pidgin English phrases used by the characters in the two plays; - give the exact meaning of each phrase in relation to the theme of the play in which it appears. This may also mean that we are going to analyse Pidgin English phrases at the semantic level which is the study of meanings. Through out this analysis, we will say what all is about when a character speaks in Pidgin English. We find it also important to mention that all the phrases in Pidgin English selected for analysis convey the same message. The problem lies on the way it does it. In this respect, some of those phrases will be analysed together in order to avoid repetition of actions, ideas, thoughts, feelings, etc.

It comes to light when we read through *The Road* and *The Trials of Brother Jero* that the use of Pidgin English fits the exploration of the theme of corruption in a broader sense, and in particular, political and religious corruption. In plain words, the depiction of the issue of corruption in the spheres of politics and religion justifies the use of Pidgin English in *The Road* and *The Trials of Brother Jero*. In addition, Wole Soyinka in his *The Road* and *The Trials of Brother Jero* uses Pidgin English to emphasize the socio-economic and political aspects of Nigerian pre-civil war life. More specifically, *The Road* is a play rooted in the Yoruba culture. The characters who speak in Pidgin English in this play are on the one side Salubi, Samson and Say Tokyo Kid, all of them work on the road in the sense that they are respectively passengers, touts and driver's mates to Kotonu (the driver), driver-trainee (Salubi), driver and captain

of thugs (say Tokyo kid). On the other hand, there are 1st, 2nd and 3rd Man who are buyers of items from road accidents that the Professor sells in his Aksident Store.

The exact situation and circumstance that lead and force Salubi, Samson and Say Tokyo Kid to resort to the use of Pidgin English is that, they are users of the road. Their job obliges them to always be in contact with people such as travelers, passengers, militaries, tradesmen and tradeswomen whose local language is not Yoruba, and cannot communicate and express themselves in Yoruba. In this situation, English becomes the vehicular language, the language for communication. It is not Standard English, the language in a form that fits the social and urban environment that is Pidgin English.

As for *The Trials of Brother Jero*, first of all, this play as *The Road*, is a satire. It describes and denounces religious hypocrisy and corruption practised by a religious leader, the self-proclaimed Prophet Jero. The situations that lead Chume are the discovery by his own, that Brother Jero the Prophet and his master goes with his wife Amope. The other situation is Chume's prayer-parody in which he exposes their materialistic obsession rather than being spiritual leaders whose first concern might be the good spiritual life for their community.

Furthermore, reading through *The Road*, it comes to light the following Pidgin English phrases. Some of them have already been analysed by Michael Cosser in his article entitled "The Deployment of Code in Soyinka's *The Road*: A Stylistic Analysis". But Michael Cosser focusses his analysis on the levels of phonology, morphology and lexicon of Nigerian Pidgin English widely. The author in very few words analyses some of the Pidgin English phrases from *The Road* at the level of semantics. We are going further in this analysis in order to find out as much as possible the meaning of each of the selected Pidgin English phrases used by the characters in the play, and say the extent to which they integrate the main theme of corruption depicted in the play.

To begin with the Nigerian Pidgin English phrase (1) the play writes, "Na palm oil" (It is palm oil), (Salubi, p. 152). This phrase is used by Salubi to Samson about himself when the play opens; it addresses the reality of Professor's establishment, of an illegal accident store house. In fact, the action of the play in which this Pidgin English phrase is used describes the event in the way that, Samson wakes Salubi, a would-be driver who is desperately waiting for Professor to forge him a driving

licence. Salubi tells Samson that it is early in the morning; he can go back to sleep if he is going to start that again. Then, he starts to put on his chauffeur's uniform. This calls Samson's attention. He asks him who lends him the uniform. Salubi answers that he buys it with his own money. Samson sees a blood-stain on the uniform, and tells Salubi at least he might have washed it. This causes Salubi's reaction that is his use of 'Na palm-oil' (It is palm oil). This means that Salubi does not agree with Samson that the cloth he buys in the accident store bears a blood-stain. In his defensive, Salubi considers it as a palm-oil stain.

Reading through this action and the use of the Pidgin English phrase under consideration, we understand that, in the mind of Salubi the important thing is to have a chauffeur's uniform which could make him a driver. To this respect, he does not hesitate to buy and wear the bloodstained uniform of a former driver, victim of road accident. This practice of using reminders of road accident create a state of continued anxiety, a state that, according to Freud, readies and prepares the conscious for future shock. Wole Soyinka satirises such practice in his native Nigeria, and we join our voice to Soyinka's to denounce this behaviour in all Africa because, at this level, what is satirizable in Nigeria is also denouncable in the rest of Africa, why not in other continents. However, in other parts of the world, innovations like smoother roads, air bags, sound systems, the visibility and the availability of necessary road signs, etc. make it possible for drivers to forget and minimize the danger of road accident. This is a good example to follow.

From the details we have provided on the use of the Pidgin English phrase above, it becomes clear that it integrates the theme of corruption in *The Road*.

Pidgin English phrase (2) is 'You dey like monkey wey stoway inside sailor suit' (You like a monkey stowed inside a sailor suit), (Samson, p.152). This phrase works as a real simily in the sense that the word like is used to serve the comparison of Salubi's dress style to a monkey stowed inside a sailor suit. Through this Pidgin English phrase, Samson tells Samson how funny he looks when he wears his uniform. Samson finds this uniform very funny. This judgement comes from the fact that, Samson has not yet the job when he wear the corresponding uniform. Then, the sailor suit is not made for monkey to be stowed inside. Samson finds Salubi funny to wear the uniform. This phrase also expresses Samson's attitude of mockery to Salubi, and the lack of concord.

This Pidgin English phrase addresses the issues of corruption. It has a close relation to the first phrase we have analysed above.

Pidgin English phrase (3) is ‘‘*Wes matter? Na me you take dream last night or na wetin? Why you no mind your own business for heaven’s sake!*’’ (What’s the matter? Did I sleep with you last night, or what? Why don’t you mind your own business for heaven’s sake!), (Salubi, 153). The meaning of this phrase is that, Salubi uses it to tell Samson in a rude way that he does not want him to ask about something private. The first part of this phrase, especially ‘‘*Na me you take dream last night or na wetin?*’’ is actually an allusion to orality, but in Pidgin English. It only reinforces the idea of leaving a side one’s own concerns, and talk about another person’s in a negative way.

Pidgin English phrase (4) is ‘‘*Private wey no get licence. Go siddon my friend.*’’ (Private driver with no licence. Sit down my friend), (Samson, p. 153). Through this phrase, Samson expresses the rise of the feeling of desperation as to the possession of the driving licence. To solve the problem, Samson promises help Salubi to get his driving licence from the Professor’s forgery. At this level again, in other parts of the world efforts are made to improve the conditions leading to obtaining a driving licence. They include theoretical and practical training. But, in Wole Soyinka’s Nigeria, in all Africa, and in other continents people resort to corruption, use of false document, treachery to obtain their driving licence.

It is in this sense that the Pidgin English phrase under examination addresses the issue of corruption. Pidgin English phrase (5) is ‘‘*Wes matter? You no chop this morning?*’’ *I say I no hear you.*’’ (What is the matter? You didn’t breakfast this morning? I can’t hear you), (Samson, p.155). The equivalence of this phrase uses the word breakfast. We find it important to resort to the context of the play in which this phrase is used. In fact, the phrase ‘‘*Wes matter? You no chop this morning?*’’ *I say I no hear you*’’ is the continuation of Samson and Salubi’s parody. To this effect, we go back to the parts of the scene where Samson plays the role of a millionaire and Salubi plays the role of a policeman. As far as Samson is concerned, we take into account his metaphorical statement that is, going to sleep in the churchyard with all the dead-body is the way to make money which means and refers to Professor’s ignoble practices leading to road accidents and death. Samson adds that Salubi can get money from the dead-body, certainly by acting as the Professor. Then, he asks if Professor has money; Salubi answers that Professor may even be millionaire, and one of these days he will

find out where Professor hides his money. After, Samson tells Salubi that sometimes he thinks, what he will do with all that money if he is a millionaire. Salubi says that he will marry ten wives; whereas Samson will buy all the transport lorries in the country. As for the ultimate phrase under examination, we provide the following,

Samson: E sa mi.
 Samson: Sing my praise
 Salubi [down on his knees, salaams.]: African millionaire!
 Samson: I can't hear you.
 Salubi: Delicate millionaire!
Samson: Wes matter? You no chop this morning? I say I no hear you. (my italics)
 Salubi: Samson de millionaire!
 Samson: Ah, my friends, what can I do for you?
 Salubi [in attitude of prayer.]: Give us this day our daily bribe.
 Amen.¹²⁷

We have provided all the details above because they help understand the meaning of the phrase in Pidgin English under consideration. The important thing when we read through this phrase is that, it serves Samson to claim for a song of praise to Salubi. We read in Samson the desire to sustain himself above Salubi. In this respect, he embodies the Professor. He becomes, replaces Professor when he is away. This is quite evident because, he addresses Salubi alone, but he puts the word 'friends' in plurals. This means that he asks Salubi and himself about what he can do for them.

Salubi answers that he gives them their daily bribe (which is a mockery to the Lord's Prayer) they expect from Professor, their master. In view of this, Samson and Salubi are also accused of corruption like the Professor. They are guilty of the same crime as the Professor.

In addition, we find it also important to mention that, the dialogue above contains language variations that reveals the situation of plurilinguism. This phenomenon prevails in Africa. We consider it as part of Wole Soyinka's aesthetic features. In the dialogue above the variations of languages used by Samson and Salubi alone are Yoruba, Nigerian Pidgin English and formal English. Apart from those language variations in the dialogue, there are theatrical, comic and satirical potentialities in the text.

As for Pidgin English phrase (6), it is '*Me sah? To breathe into millionaire face. My very self sah?*' (Me sir? To breathe into a millionaire face. Am I that really

¹²⁷ Wole Soyinka, "The Road" in *Collected Plays I*, op. cit., p. 155.

sir?), (Salubi, p. 156). This phrase is used by Salubi as their parody with Samson goes on. The exact part of the scene in which this phrase is used addresses Samson and Salubi's attitude to the police. In fact, Samson who now, in the absence of Professor, considers himself superior to Salubi promises to promote him Captain of his private bodyguard. He tells him the condition, that is, when the police bring their riot squad with tear-gas, etc. Salubi must open his mouth and breathe on them. That is the way to counter them. Samson adds that, Salubi must take care not to breathe in his direction, which may also mean, he must not prevent him from being a millionaire. This last order makes Salubi say, '*Me sah? To breathe into millionaire face. My very self sah?*

Reading through the phrase above and the context in which it is used, it comes to light that both Samson and Salubi think on the realization of their dream of becoming millionaires like Professor. In addition, they are ready to do whatever action that can make them millionaires, even countering any actions of the police to their mistakes on the road.

The next Pidgin English phrase (7) is '*Salubi: Why you no surrender self? The man say'e no want drive again but you continue worry am as if you na in wife Haba!* (Why don't you Surrender? That man says he doesn't want to go again but you still continue to worry him as if you were his wife. Haba!), (Salubi, p. 161).

This phrase is used by Salubi as a response to Samson on Kotonu's decision to give up his job of driving lorries such as 'No Danger No Delay'. In fact, after he runs over Murano, whom he nearly kills, Kotonu panics and tells Samson that the engine of his truck is stalled, even though he is not inside the truck and not experiencing any problems with it. Kotonu's misperception of the stalled engine foreshadows the mental state that will eventually prevent him from driving 'No Danger No Delay'. This means also that, after the accident with Murano and the apparent stalling of his motor, Kotonu prefers to sleep and do nothing, simply give up all animation.

In addition, when Professor returns, he tells Kotonu that he must not think he accepts all such manifestations as truth. That is not the Word, but every discovery is a sign-post. Professor and Kotonu, his lorry driver who is about to give up, go to other accident sites. Professor goes and shows Kotonu yet another crash. Kotonu is now operating behind the tailboard that is the Aksident Store which was Sergeant Burma's department. Burma was the late manager of Professor's store and a fearless oil tank driver. He recently died in an oil tanker explosion when his brakes failed. Kotonu

becomes not his business partner, nor his partner friend, but his successor. Kotonu has taken over.

Furthermore, Samsom wants Kotonu back on the road; he wants him to take back his licence, 'not to start keeping shop for the mortuary.' (p. 161) Samson fears about this, and considers it a further exposure to traumatic scenes which will result in increased anxiety and prolong his driver's state of paralysis.

Reading through the details above sheds light on understanding that, the Pidgin English phrase *Why you no surrender self? The man say 'e no want drive again but you continue worry am as if you na in wife Haba!* is used by Salubi because of Samson's furious attitude to Kotonu's choice to give up driving the lorry, and to become the manager of the Aksident Store.

Pidgin English phrases that follow will be examined together because, reading through them all gives the same meaning. However, the meaning is conveyed through different phrases, and through different words. These phrases are (8) '*Why you dey worry your head for dat kind person? Abi you tink say Kotonu no sabbe de man dey crase*', (Why don't you worrie with that kind of person? You think that Kotonu does not know that this man is crasy), (Salubi, p. 162); (9) '*Why he dey come play dat ting every morning self? Nobody dey Inside church*' (Why does he come to play that thing every morning alone? There is nobody inside the church), (Salubi, p. 162); (10) '*Why 'e no kuku play the ting inside?*' (Why does he play himself?), (Salubi, p. 162); (11) '*Dat one no to church, na high society.*' (That is not church, that's high society), (Salubi, p. 162); (12) '*Samson: You no sabe de ting wey man dey call class so shurup your mout Professor enh*' (You know nothing about those things which men call class so shut up Professor enh), (Samson, p.162); (13) '*If na you be bishop and somebody dey do dat kin' ting you no vex?* (If you were a bishop and somebody would do something like that wouldn't you be vexed?), (Salubi, p.163); (14) '*You tink I fear all dat in nonsense?*' (Do you think that I am afraid of all this nonsense?), (Salubi, p. 164).

We find it important to mention that, some of these phrases have been analysed at the level of phonology alone by Michael Cosser. Our main concern now is to examine them, to give their exact meaning, and to find out the way they are linked to the main theme of the play, that is to say, corruption. All these phrases have been used by Samson and Salubi. Through these phrases again, both characters express their

dissatisfaction, disagreement, refusal, departing of way with Professor. They were his followers and workers. Samson and Salubi through the use of the Pidgin English phrases above express their opinion about Professor. To them, the Professor is a bizzare personality whose language is semantically abstract to the extent that, the word which was a sacred force in his life has become mere abstraction. They also consider that Professor has lost contact with the deity because of his duel between the Bishop which culminates in the spiritual collapse of the entire church system; the negative impact of his intellectual search for the word on the road is realized in the frequent fatal accidents caused by his removal of road signs; the drivers' drunkenness at his palm-wine shack, his forgery of driving licenses, his behaviour to encourage graveyard robbery. In stead of giving up with his approach to the search of the word, Professor is further encouraged by his newly discovered profit in the quest.

All the disdainful attitudes and wrongdoings by Professor lead his followers, especially Samson and Salubi to say the worse things through the Pidgin English phrases above. They express their departing ways from Professor.

We share Nelson O. Fashina's interpretation that, Wole Soyinka's thesis in *The Road* leads toward the creation about the destructive influence of language upon man, especially the African in post colonial society.¹²⁸

Pidgin English phrases (15) '*Salubi: Me a dey go find work. De whole morning done vanished for your cinema show.*' (As for me I' m going to search for work. The whole morning has been wasted for your cinema show), (Salubi, p.165) and (16) '*Salubi: If I find lorry wey want experienced tout I go come call you.*' (If I find a lorry where they want an experienced tout I will call you), (Salubi, p. 165) are about Salubi's decision to go and look for a job in stead of wasting time, after he and Samson have denounced Professor's wrongdoings. Unfortunately, Samson does share Salubi's vision. He prevents him from going to search for a work. That is the essence of Pidgin English phrase (17) '*Where you dey run go self? Siddon here make we talk*' (Where are you running? Sit down and let's talk), (Samson, p. 165), and through another reply of the phrase, that is (18) '*Siddon here dey make cinema.*' (Sit down, here comes the

¹²⁸ Nelson O. Fashina, "Deification or Assassination of Language: Linguistic Alienation in *The Road*" https://www.academia.edu/3251599/Deification_or_assassination_of_language_Linguistic_alienation_in_Wole_Soyinkas_The_Road (March 2015).

cinema), (Salubi, p. 165) Salubi goes and leaves Samson with Kotonu who returns with an armful of motor parts, an old shoe, a cap, etc.

Through the phrases above, we distinguish two types of behaviour. The first is denouncing and refusing the wrong ways to follow good ways. The second is denouncing and refusing wrongdoings, but staying far from engaging oneself in the right direction.

The last situation that we have pointed out, that is, continuing to consciously in wrong ways fits the characters of Samson again, 1st Man, and 2nd Man through their own sayings in Pidgin English (19) *'Shoo shoo, you no dey sleep for house?'* (Shoo shoo, shouldn't you be sleeping at home?), (Samson, p.174), (20) *'Adi dis one craze. Wis kin sleep for this time?'* (Maybe he's crazy. Who sleeps at this hour?), (1st Man, p. 174), (21) *'E no well 'e no well, na dat one we go chop? Call am make e commot onetime.'* (He's not fine he's not fine, are we going to eat him? Tell him to come out right now), (1st Man, p. 174).

The Pidgin English phrases mentioned above mean the characters' disappointment to Kotonu's attitude to work when they visit the accident store and realize that it has not been opened. They run it in order to buy goods they need. They consider that Kotonu has failed. He has let them down. In their talk, the discontented buyers give a hint that Professor is responsible for the appointment of Kotonu as the successor to the late Sergeant Burma.

The aspects we find important to point out in through reading the phrases above are first of all, supply of second-hand car, vehicle parts, the clothes of the victims taken from them are sold out to innocent buyers. Secondly, we see in this practice a danger for further road accidents.

Pidgin English phrase (22) is *'Lef your load, I say lef your dirty bundle. Lef am. All right I sorry I no know say na your picken Make you all walka this side If una wan look make you go look for other side. You foolish people. Wetin you stop dey look now? Black man too useless, useless una get rubbish for look you dey satisfy Hurry up, no waste of time. God punish you, you wretched woman, why you dey carry your picken look that kind thing? You tink na cowboy cinema? Commot my friend... a-ah, these people too foolish. Na de kind tink person dey show small pickin? If e begin dream bad dream and shout for night you go rush go native doctor. Na another man calamity you fit take look cinema.'* (Leave your load, I say leave your dirty bundle.

Leave them. All right, I'm sorry, I didn't know that these are your children. Let's all of you walk this side. If you have a wish to take a look, go and look somewhere else. You foolish people, why do you stop and look around? Black people are too useless, they are not satisfied until they have something to stare at. Hurry up. There is no time to be waste. God will punish you, you wretched woman, why are you carrying your children like that? Do you think that this is a cowboy movie? Come out my friend...a-ah, these people are foolish. And those who show this to their children? If they start having nightmares, you better take them to a medicine man. And to watch another man's calamity you can go to the cinema as well), (*Samson*, p.198).

Reading through this phrase, it comes to light that public transport system was and still not good, easy and convenient to use, fast, safe, clean and affordable in post colonial Nigeria. The role of Pidgin English language variation through the phrase mentioned above is also give the meaning with many details that, public transport is a real problem which needs great attention from the public authorities. Among the details, negative factors provided in the Pidgin phrase under consideration, which prevent the public transport system to be good and improved are first of all, the poor conditions of the only vehicle on the road and the road itself, the limited number of vehicles. Then, the phrase also mentions such a very bad behaviour of touts and drivers, due certainly to their drunkenness of palm-wine delivered to them by Murano in Professor's shack, speeding, frequent arguments, querrels, fight, etc. about and in the vehicle between touts and passengers on the one side, on the other side between the tout and the driver. In addition, passengers, children are confused to merchandises by touts. The meaning of this phrase is that, passengers in the lorries on the roads are in permanent danger and insecurity, exposed to eventual accident and death. Passengers are obliged to take this lorry because they have not any other alternative and choice.

In relation to the situation meant in this Pidgin English phrase above, Wole Soyinka himself gives us the definition of the vehicle called *bolekaja* under referred to in the phrase:

an expression of transportation torture on four wheels. Crowded, lethal in accidents – its carriage simply disintegrates like matchwood – it is a form of cheaply constructed, usually unlicensed instrument of death which bears on its front and/ or side

panels a series of admonitions which alas, are very blithely ignored by the suicide-bent drivers.¹²⁹

The following words from Wole Soyinka again, also mean that public transport, especially its character and its organization does not match the passengers' expectations. He writes:

The competition for passengers – those who have no choice except for this form of transport – is keen and noisy. The boleka tout has to scream for attention. Sometimes this competition results in a tug-of-war for luggage or the very person of the traveller. The luggage may end in one vehicle, a toddler in another, while the mother is struggling to extricate herself from the interior of the third.¹³⁰

In a special note we find it important to elaborate more a bit on one the aspects mentioned in the Pidgin phrase under consideration, we mean, the lack of roads, and the unavailability of the few to the public, the ordinary people at some periods of times in some African countries. In fact, the essential idea is that, in some of African capital cities there is only one main road that leads to downtown that is also the city center. This situation causes very heavy traffics and waste of time for the people who use the road to go to work, to school, to the university, etc. The worse is that, sometimes, the use of the road by the people is restricted, limited, forbidden, especially, when the same and only one road is also used by an important political authority.

This real fact is also our interpretation of Wole Soyinka concern of the road through the voice of his character in Pidgin English. In other parts of the world, innovations and efforts are made to build roads, railways and metro networks in the way that the people have the choice to use the underground or the ground network, be it by bus, train or metro.

Pidgin English (23) is *“Then it was Fai! Fai! Fai! You think say I get petrol for waste? Take your foot commot for ancelerator! Small small! I say small small-you tink say dis one na football game . Fai fai fai! You dey press brake –Gi-am! I say do am soft! You wey no fit walka na fly you wan’ fly?”* (Then it was Fai! Fai! Fai! Do you think that I have petrol to waste? Take your foot off the accelerator! Slowly! I said slowly-one could think it is football game. Fai fai fai! You’re pressing the brakes – Gi-

¹²⁹ Wole Soyinka, “Responses in Kind,” *Art, Dialogue*, p. 267.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 267.

am! I say press it very softly! You are not able to walk and you want to fly?, Samson, Pp. 202-203).

This Pidgin English phrase is used by Samson to Salubi, after he has told Professor, openly and face to face that he is a very confusing person that, he cannot follow him. The very direct message this phrase conveys is about the lorry driving, especially Samson's apparent lack of confidence on Salubi's way of driving. He advises him to take off his shoes so that he has sensitive soles on his feet brakes, and be able to judge the pressure on the pedals exactly right. The following indications from the phrase give it its exact meaning: "You think say I get petrol for waste? Take your foot commot for ancelerator! All a waste of time. Every time I started the lorry it went like a railway". Through these statements, Samson the tout means that his main concern is saving time and petrol; whatever happens as the consequence of speeding is not essential to him.

The following Pidgin English phrases are used in the play in order to convey the same message. They have the same meaning. Through these two phrases Samson emulates himself. He thinks that he surpasses all the other drivers. He identifies himself to Sergeant Burma. He is superior to the other drivers because of the loads and lorry he carries. That is the essence of his evocation of Sergeant Burma who was proud of his tanker. The phrases we refer to are (24) *'I drive bigger tanks in Burma campaign. I drive supply caravans, and I turn-turn this picken with one hand Na picken 'e be Na small pickin . You wan' try? You tink say na every Tom Dick and Harry fit drive tanker? My friend, me na veteran driver...'* (I've driven bigger in the Burma campaign. I've driven supply caravans, and I really turned those little ones with one hand. And little ones they where Small little ones. Would you like to try? You think that every Tom Dick and Harry could drive a tanker? My friend, I am a veteran driver...), (Samson, p. 216) and (25) *'You think I get these medals for nothing? They wan' give me the King Georges Cross self, but you know how things be for Blackman. My major recommend me for the decoration but dey begin ask how den go give black man dat kind honour? Another time the general send cablegram wit' in own hand 'E say, gi' am Victoria Cross. I say make you gi' am Blackman or no Blackman-gi' am. Dey for give me dat one but when the governor for home hear wetin dey wan' do, 'e cable back say if den give me dat kind superior medal, I go return my country begin do political agitation. Haba! Justice no dey for white man world.'* for You think I get

these medals for nothing? They wanted to give me the King Georges Cross, but you know how things are for a black man. My major recommended me for the decoration but then someone begun to ask how they would give a black man that kind of honor? Another time the general himself has sent a cablegram. He said, give him the Victoria Cross. Give it to him, Blackman or not, give it to him. He wanted to give me that himself, but when the governor has found out, he cabled back saying that if they are going to give me that kind of superior medal, I will return to my country and begin political agitation Haba! There is no justice in the white man's world. (Samson, p. 217).

Pidgin English phrase (26) is *'Den beat me so tey my backside dey like dat Zeppelin balloon. If you put pin for am 'e go burs'.*'' (They have beaten me so that until my back became like a Zeppelin balloon. If you pinned it, it would burst), (Samson, p. 217). This phrase is used by Samson with a close link to his admiration for Segeant Burma's ability to drive tanker like a tank. Samson identifies himself to Sergeant Burma who survived four years of fighting and one year as a prisoner of war. The meaning of this Pidgin English phrase comes out from the comparison that Samson makes between the way they have beaten him and the ziplining ball. The essential meaning of this phrase is the fragility of the means of transport, the big and speedy lorry used by the passengers on constraint. This phrase and the context of the action of the play in which it is used is actually a metaphor of the road as the wartime. The use of the road means being in war.

Pidgin English phrase (27) is *'Lef me! I say make you lef me. Wetin be my concern for dat one? I no care whether the Governor and in aide-de-camp finish de same hymn since yesterday. Na dey go fight for Burma? I tink say dis Rememberanve Day na for we own countryman wey die for combat Shurrap yourself. I say make you shurrap yourself. Na so we dey sing am for army camp and if you no like am make you commot for church go talk Latin for Catholic church.'*'' (Leave me alone! Isay leave me alone. What is my concern for that? I don't care whether the Governor and his aide-de-camp sing the same hymn as yesterday. Would they fight for Burma? I think that the Remembrance Day is for our countrymen who died in combat. Shut up. I said shut up. And so we sing in their commemoration at army camp if you don't like it you can go to Catholic church to talk Latin, Samson, p. 217).

The meaning of this phrase is Samson's willingness to reinforce and continue the work of Sergeant Burma. Such a conservative attitude finds justification not in the sense that Samson wants to be successor of Burma to manage Professor's Aksident Store, but, he strongly wants tankers and 'No Danger No Delay' lorries operate on the road. In this way, we think that Samson who sometimes is wise, here represents a very negative aspect of conservatism. The reason for this is that, his attitude is incompatible to change for the better in the domain of lorries' operation on the road.

Pidgin English phrase (28) is '*Samson: Sisi! A-ah. Sisi o. Sisi wey fine reach so na only bus wey fine like we own fit carry am. Wetin now sisi? Oh your portmanteau, I done put am inside bus. We na quick service, we na senior service. A-ah mama, na you dey carry all dis load for your head? A-ah. Gentleman no dey for this world again...Oya mama, we done ready for go now, na you be de las' for enter...Hey , Kotonu, fire am, make am vu-um...oga babi you no hear? We done ready for first class, everything provided. If you wan' pee we stop, No delay! Wetin you dey talk? I say no delay? Which kin' policeman? Abi you know dis bus? No delay...no policeman go delay us for road. This bus get six corner. No nonsense no palaver... oh corporal come on sir, come on for we bus sir... a-ah long time no see . Welcome o, how family sah, ah-ah, na you dey look so-so thin like sugar-cane so? Abi den dey give you too much work. Ah, o ma se o, na so policeman life be... hn, onijibiti. 'e done chop bribe in face dey shine like tomato. Ah, misisi, misisi, na you bus dey wait you here...'*' (Sisi! A-ah o. Sisi whose beauty reached so high that only a bus fine like the one we own fits her. What now sisi? Oh your portmanteau, I have put it inside the bus. We are the quick service, we are the senior service. A-ah mama, why are you carrying all that load over your head alone? A-ah. There are no more gentlemen in this world ... Oya mama, we are ready to go now, and you are the last to enter ...Hey Kotonu, fire it, make sound vu-um...oga babi don't you hear? We are ready for the first class, everything provided If you want to pee we will stop. No delay! What are you talking about? I said no delay? Which policeman? Don't you know this bus? No delay...no policeman will delay us. This bus runs through six corners and we've bribed each one. No nonsense, no palaver...oh corporal come along to our bus sir...a-ah we haven't seen you for a long time. Welcome o, how is your family sir, ah-ah, you look as thin as a sgar-cane don't you? Maybe they give too much work. Ah, o ma se o, that's the life of a

policeman...hn, injibiti, he has taken so much bribes that his face shines like a tomato. Ah misisi, misisi, it is your bus which awaits you here... Samson, p.225)

The essential fact in this Pidgin English speech is that, Samson uses it as his own tactic to solicitate a great number of passengers in his lorry. This tactic can be summarized in the exaltation of the beauty of any young trendy girl and everyone, the quality of their service in the lorry, the high speedy of the lorry, the lorry is about to go, no policemen can delay the lorry, etc. We also mention that, this brand of Pidgin English contains Yoruba, pidgin and many other English varieties.

Pidgin English phrase (29) is ‘*Wetin enh? Wetin? You tink say myself I no go die some day? When person die some, ’e done die and dat one done finish. I beg, if you see moto accident make you tell me. We sabbee good business ...sell spare part and second –hand clothes. Wetin? You tink say I get dat kind sentimentation? Me wey I done see dead body to tey I no fit chop meat unless den cook am to nonsense? Go siddon my friend. Business na business. If you see accident make you tell me I go run go there before those useless men steal all the spare part finish.*’ (What enh? What? You think that I will not die some day? When a person dies, he is dead and that one is finished. Please, if you see a car accident tell me. We know how to make a good business ...Selling spare parts and second-hand clothes. What? You think that I have sentiments of that kind? Me who have seen so many dead corpses that I am not able to eat meat unless it is completely overcooked? Sit down my friend. Business is business. If you see an accident tell me. I will run there before those useless men steal all the spare parts, Samson, p. 218).

This scene is about Samson re-enactment of the uncommon views and attitudes of the oil-tanker driver, Sergeant Burma. It also reveals the issues of the fierce professional pride of all those who work, live and die on the roads, the ideological formation of West African veterans who fought in the empire’s wars as members of ‘subject’ races. Through this phrase, Samson conveys the message that, his driving power comes from the fact that he reanimates the dead man, Sergeant Burma since he died. In this regards, this Pidgin English phrase used by Samson incorporates Sergeant Burma’s voice, gesture mannarisms, etc. The exact meaning of this phrase is that Samson directly reveals his determination to continue Surgeant Burma’s unachieved work of managing the Aksident Store. He declares ‘if you see a car accident tell me. We know how to make a good business ...Selling spare parts and second-hand clothes.

Business is business. If you see an accident tell me. I will run there before those useless men steal all the spare parts.’’

As the preceding phrase, this sentence also represents Samson negative aspect of conservative attitude. He is willing to follow the wrong way, to do the same inhuman action like his predecessor, Surgeant Burma.

Reading through all Pidgin English phrases we have examined above, it comes to light that, the four characters involved in the actions of the play *The Road* in which Pidgin English is used are all men. They are: Samson, Salubi, Kotonu, and Say Tokyo Kid. Their speeches in Pidgin English tell about the middle social class in post colonial Nigeria. Reading through facts in the play reveals that, first of all, the issue of employment, job opportunity, equality of chance as to the finding of job is a difficult problem, a challenge. Then, the fact only men are present in the sector of public transport reveals a possible exclusion for women to find a job in this domain. In comparison to the reality in other countries, especially European, American, and Asian, the difference is that, in those countries women and men operate, work side by side, and have equality of chance to work in the sector of public transport and other domains. Again, in those countries, women are taxi drivers, bus drivers, train and metro conductors, pilotes, etc.

The next Pidgin English phrases are taken from *The Trials of Brother Jero*. *The Trials of Brother Jero* conveys a satirical message about the vices and follies of the contemporary Nigerian society through religious institutions. In this play, Wole Soyinka presents prophet Jero as a representative of the hypocritical religious leader. The Pidgin English phrases selected in this play have all been used by Chume who is Brother Jero’s assistant, to express his ignorance first of all, and his discovery of the hypocrisy behind the relation between Prophet Brother Jero and Amope, his wife.

Pidgin English phrase (30) is ‘ ‘ Chume: *What for ...why, why, why, why ‘e do am? For two years ‘e no let me beat that woman. Why? No because God no like am. That one no fool me any more. ‘E say ‘in sleep for beach whether ‘e rain or cold but that one too na big lie. The man get house and ‘e sleep there every night. But ‘in get peace for ‘e in house, why ‘en no let me get peace for mine? Wetin I do for am? Anyway, how they come meet? What time ‘e know say na my wife? Why ‘e dey protect am from me? Perhaps na my woman dey give am chop and in return he promise to see ‘in husband no beat am. A-a-aah, give am clothes, give am food and all comforts and*

necessities, and for exchange, 'in go see that 'in husband no beat am ...Mmmmmm. No, is not possible. I no believe that. If na so, how they come quarrel then. Why she go sit for front of 'in house demand all 'in money. I no beat am yet... (What for...why, why, why, what have I done to him? For two years he didn't let me beat that woman. Why? Not because God didn't like it. He won't fool me again with that. He is not the man of God. He told us to sleep on the beach no matter if it rains or if it's cold but was a big lie too. The man get house and 'e sleep there every night. But if he has a peaceful house, why shouldn't he let me live peacefully? What did I do? Anyway, how did they meet? When did he learn this about my wife? Why is he protecting her? Perhaps my woman gives him food and in return he promises to watch that her husband didn't beat her. A-a-a-ah, gives him clothes, gives him food and all comforts and necessities, and in exchange, he will watch that her husband didn't beat her. Mmmmmm. No, it is not possible. I don't believe that. If it's so, how they will quarrel then. Why will she sit in front of the house demanding all that money. I didn't beat her yet...Chume, pp. 169-70).

This speech in Pidgin English means that at this level, Chume suspects Brother Jero's method through which he forbids him to beat his wife. Chume asks himself the why, what for, how, and when questions in order to try his understanding on the true nature of his master's relationship to his wife. Even though Chume is making effort to understand the reality, doubt is always taking him back, and placing him in the state of ignorance.

Pidgin English phrase (31) is '*Chume: Almighty! Chume, fool! O God, my life done spoil. My life done spoil finish. O God a no' get eyes for my head Na lie. Na big lie. Na pretence 'e de pretend that wicked woman! She no' go collect nutin! She no' mean to sleep for outside house. The Prophet na 'in lover. As soon as 'e dark, she go in go meet 'in man. O God, wetin a do for you wey you go spoil my life so? Wetin make you vex for me so? I offend you? Chume, foolish man, your life done ruin. Your life done spoil. Yeah, ye...ah, ah, ye-e-ah, they done ruin Chume for life...ye-e-ah, ye-e-ah,...* (Almighty... Chume, fool! O God, my life is destroyed. My life is destroyed completely. O God. I can't see anything. It's a lie. And all that she is pretending that wicked woman! She won't get anything! She didn't want to sleep outside the house. The Prophet must be her lover. As soon as it gets dark, she goes out to meet him. O God, what have I done to you that you destroyed my life so much? Have I offended

you? Chume, foolish man, your life turned ruins. Your life is destroyed. Yeah, ye...ah, ah, ye-e- ah, ye-e-ah..., Chume, p. 170).

This excerpt is the continuation of the phrase (30). In this part of the Pidgin English phrase, Chume's mind moves from the states of doubt and ignorance to the great probability that the Prophet might be Amope's lover.

Last but not least, Pidgin English phrases (32) '...my life done spoil finish...a no' get eyes my head....Na big lie. Na pretence'e de pretend that wicked woman! She no go collect nutin! She no' mean to sleep for outside house. The prophet na' im lover...' and (33) 'Adulterer! Woman-thief! Na today a go finish you!', (Chume, p.170) mean, Chume discovers that he is the classic victim of Prophet Brother Jero's method. He discovers that Bother Jero is not only Amope's debtor, but he is also her lover. Chume accuses his wife as a liar and an adulterer.

II-2- INTERTEXTUAL VARIATIONS.

The issue of literary text autonomy had been deeply examined in the twentieth century by theoreticians of literature. Among them we mention Russian formalists who found that the literary text is recentered on itself. Through this trend, they wanted to free the literary text from its historical, sociological and psychological dimensions.

The essential fact is to found out the different levels of language that coexist in the text. The post- structuralists talk in terms of deconstructing the text in order to give off the elements of its organisation. In relation to what we have just written, Julia Kristeva's words are illustrative. She declares that 'every text is from the outset under the jurisdiction of other discourses which impose a universe on it'.¹³¹

From the beginning, the term intertextuality gave rise to controversy as to its definition. This means that the theoreticians define that concept in different ways. In Kristeva's words the term 'intertextuality' means 'permutation of texts'.¹³² This is not a movement through which a text is reproduced by another. But the need to show that 'any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and

¹³¹ Julia Kristeva, *The Revolution in Poetic Language* 1974 (trans. Margaret Waller. 1985, New York: Colombia University Press, 1985, p. 388-9.

¹³² Julia Kristeva cited by Mary Orr in *Intertextuality: Debates and Contexts* (Oxford: Polity Press, 2003), p. 28.

transformation of others’’.¹³³ This means also that, various linkages exist between texts, or between different discourse events. Additionally, the meaning of any text or utterance is shaped by what has come before it, as well as in anticipation of future responses. There is a complex interaction between a text and other texts taken as basic to the creation or interpretation of the text. As a result, the literary text is perceived as a ‘network of fragments that refer to still outer narrative texts’’.¹³⁴

This means that intertextuality is such useful term because it foregrounds notions of relationality, interconnectedness and interdependence in modern cultural life. Additionally, in the postmodern epoch, theorists often claim, it is not possible any longer to speak of originality or the uniqueness of the artistic object, be it painting or novel, since every artistic object is so clearly assembled from bits and pieces of already existing art.¹³⁵ In addition, a text as fragment that refers to still outer narrative texts is associated with literability that is one of the two types of intertextuality. It refers to the repeatability of certain textual fragments, to citations in its broadest sense to include not only explicit allusions, references, and quotations within a discourse, but also, unannounced sources and influences, phrases in the air, and tradition. That is to say every text is composed of ‘traces,’ pieces of other texts that help constitute its meaning.

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The scrutiny of the term intertextuality shows that the work will essentially be based on the writing defined respectively by Devesa who thinks that the main idea behind intertextuality is to affirm that every text is posited at the junction of several other texts which is at the same time the rereading, accentuation, condensation, movement and depth. And Derrida also argues along this line. He maintains that ‘each text is a machine with multiple reading heads for other texts ...where one text reads another’’.¹³⁷ This statement is a further insistence on the fact that a literary text is not

¹³³ Julia Kristeva, *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature art* (trans. Thomas Gora and Alice Jardine, and edited by Leon Roudiez, 1980, p. 36.

¹³⁴ http://cbae./nmsu.ed/ dboje/qm/5_intertextuality.htm.

¹³⁵ Graham Allen, *Intertextuality* (London: Routledge, 2000), p. 5.

¹³⁶ James E. Porter, ‘Intertextuality and the Discourse Community.’ *Rhetoric Review*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (Taylor& Francis Ltd, Autumn, 1986), 34- 47, p. 35.

¹³⁷ Jacques Derrida 1979, Living On. In: H Bloom (Ed): *Deconstruction and Criticism* (New York: Continuum), p. 107.

just a rereading of another text but a text dialogues with another text and indeed with history.

The idea mentioned above is also shared by Judith Still and Michael Worton who explained that every writer or speaker (in the broadest sense) before she or he is a creator of text and therefore the work of art inevitably shot through with references, quotations and influences of every kind.¹³⁸

As for the application of intertextuality, we have chosen some of Wole Soyinka's plays that constitute the corpus of this dissertation. In all the works considered, the main characters are men: Demoke, Igwuzu, Eman, Professor, Baroka, Kongi, and Brother Jero. Their action and speech prompt us to conduct this study. If we chose those plays, the reason is that they have been written with a very high degree of intertextuality. That is to say, they are framed by others in many ways. We may evoke the concept of coexistence between the texts under scrutiny.

It seems now clear that we are going to study the phenomenon of intertextuality in Wole Soyinka's plays under investigation. The aim is to discover the way Wole Soyinka has written his plays. To this respect our focus in this section is to establish the level of influence between Wole Soyinka's plays. We shall look at the thematic points of convergence in his works, and at his stylistic use of language, especially the influence of his mother tongue (Yoruba) on her literary works. This section will also demonstrate how much Wole Soyinka's writings have enriched the linguistic repertoire of her mother tongue; or how much they have achieved in the creation of another variety of the English Language. In this analysis we shall look at intertextuality in the selected works by Wole Soyinka. The reading of the author's plays reveals that the method of intertextuality is from outside sources, from the other works by Wole Soyinka, and from texts by other writers. Intertextuality can be both internal and external. Mbanga describes intertextuality as [...an implicit or explicit reference point between literary works of the same author].¹³⁹

¹³⁸ Judith Still and Michael Worton, *Intertextuality: Theory and Practice* (London: Manchester University Press, 1990), p. 1.

¹³⁹ Anatole Mbanga, *Les procédés de création dans l'œuvre de Sony Labou Tansi* (Paris: L' Harmattan, 1996), p.156.

From this definition, we may understand that external intertextuality is applied when the material of a text is borrowed from outside his works, from another writer's work.

This analysis will be carried out by drawing inspiration from Gerard Genette's theories and approach because he believes in criticism's ability to locate and describe a text's significance, even if that significance concerns an intertextual relation between a text and other texts. Gerard Genette regroups the concept intertextuality together with: paratextuality, metatextuality, hypertextuality, and architextuality. Genette's concept of intertextuality includes: quotation that is a phrase or passage from a book, poem, play, etc., remembered and spoken, especially to illustrate succinctly or support a point or an argument; plagiarism, the authorized use or close imitation of the style and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one's own original work; allusion, a brief, usually indirect reference to a person, place, or event- real or fiction. In other words, it is a reference within a literary work, to another work of fiction, a film, a piece of art, or even a real event; and reference, a significance in a specified context.

Apart from these aspects of intertextuality, there exist many others we are not concerned with. Citation, allusion, and reference correspond to the study of the plays under scrutiny. They inspire the main division of this section into three sub-sections.

The first sub-section deals with the use of citation as a phenomenon. We will analyse the different forms of quotation, and the way they are structured, and introduced in the plays under study. The second point of this section addresses the different allusions in the plays that constitute the corpus of this dissertation. The last point deals with reference in Wole Soyinka's selected plays.

II-2-1-Citations.

To begin with citations, *The New Webster's Dictionary of the English Language*¹⁴⁰ defines them as ' the act of citing a passage from a book or person; the passage or

¹⁴⁰ *The New Webster's Dictionary of the English Language* (London: Delair Publishing Company, inc. 1981).

words quoted; quotations'.¹⁴¹ The aesthetics of citations in literature is revealed in the way that, being one of the forms of intertextuality, they enrich literature by opening its doors to other domains. In the plays by Wole Soyinka under consideration, citations are presented in three forms: citations between inverted comas, citations in italics and citations isolated from the main texts. The most recurrent of the three forms is citations between inverted comas. Instances of illustrations are the following: 'Let me anoint the head, and do you, my master, trim the bulge of his great bottom'¹⁴².

This is a passage that Demoke, as a guilty human character cites in his confession. He cites his own words he remembers on the killing of Oremole, his apprentice. The important idea in Demoke citing his own words is that he questions his master's opinion about deserving him or remaining his protector. We also see in this way of citing one's own words as fulfilling the function of emphasis. In addition, reading through this citation and the causes that make the character pronounce it, concerns the relationship between a slave and his master, an apprentice and his master, an old uncharismatic political leader and a young charismatic leader. This shows that talented inferior persons are always subjects to jealousy, hate, discrimination, elimination, etc. This fact affects the practice of democracy as people do not consider themselves in terms of qualities, talents, ideas, etc.

The other citation which follows the typographical patterns of the previous, and is semantically closed to it can be read as follows, 'No one reduces Oro's height, while I serve the wind. Watch Oremole ride on Aja's head, and I sift the dust, master, gather it below',¹⁴³ in *A Dance of the Forests*.

The aesthetic feature at the level of semantics when we read through the citation above is the refusal and inacceptance by Demoke of any person better than him. Demoke finds Oremole in the situation of reducing Oro's height. As a consequence, to prove that he does not serve the wind, Demoke reduces himself into dust that should be gathered below.

Apart from the citations which are full sentences between quotation marks, there are single words, nouns, names, phrases and a title of a constitutional document. We read them as, 'bolekaja'¹⁴⁴ which, in Yoruba means "'step down, let us fight'". It is the

¹⁴² Wole Soyinka, "A Dance of the Forests" in *Collected Plays I*, op. cit., p. 27.

¹⁴³ Ibid., p. 27.

¹⁴⁴ Wole Syinka, "The Road" in *Collected Plays I*, op. cit. p.149.

name of a type of commercial vehicle in Lagos. There is also something that is called the Bolekaja spirit which takes over drivers' senses, and make them behave in wrong ways while they drive. The results are road accidents.

The next single word which is cited is 'BEND'¹⁴⁵ in *The Road*. This word presents the specificity that it is written in all capital letters. The typical meaning or reason of this visual style is to fulfil the function of emphasis of the letters. The single word citation 'BEND' in *The Road* is one of the traffic caution sign. It is that traffic caution signs that Professor removes from the road in order to cause road accidents and death from which he survives. To this effect 'BEND' removal from the road inevitably means accidents. The reason for this is that, this particular chosen road sign to be removed warns of dangerous and unusual conditions ahead such as a curve, turn, dip, etc. In addition this road sign warns drivers to turn or cause to turn from a particular direction such as, the road bends left past the church. Professor knows very well the use of this road sign, and chooses it alone to be removed from the road as the way for him cause many accidents and deaths.

Then, we read the single word citation between inverted comas 'orisa'¹⁴⁶ in *Kongi's Harvest*. As 'bolekaja', 'orisa' is a Yoruba word. It is a spirit or deity that reflects one of the manifestations of God in the Yoruba spiritual or religious system.

As far as 'Amen', 'Forgive him, Lord', or 'In the name of Jesus [...]'¹⁴⁷ are concerned, they are all single words and phrases. The essential thing is that they are all cited-words from *The Bible*. In addition, they are not pronounced to fulfil the truth of *The Bible*, but they are used by Bother Jero as ways to hide his religious hypocrisy.

The next form of citation presents three typographic marks: inverted comas, opened and closed, italics and capital letters. Instances of illustration are sentences. Among the words used, one is in italics. It is the form of 'to be' in the present simple, that is to say 'am'. The play writes, 'I *am* her current love'¹⁴⁸, 'I *am* the Spirit of Harvest'¹⁴⁹. In these citations, and the typographic forms fulfil the function of emphasis. In here, Kongi reinforces the expression of his own grandeur. He places himself above every body. He is the highest. He identifies his being, personality to a 'Spirit'. He, but none else. This is the cult of the personality combined with religious

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 157.

¹⁴⁶ Wole Soyinka, "Kongi's Harvest" in *Collected Plays 2*, op. cit., p. 109.

¹⁴⁷ Wole Soyinka, "The Trials of Brother Jero" in *Collected Plays 2*, op. cit. pp. 156-7.

¹⁴⁸ Wole Soyinka, "Kongi's Harvest" in *Collected Plays 2*, op. cit. p. 86.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 91.

hypocrisy, as the typographic marks in the citations, that Wole Soyinka denounces through this part of the play action.

The last citation is ‘Oba Grade I by the grace of Chieftancy Succession Legislation Section II, nineteen-twenty-one’¹⁵⁰.

II-2-2-Allusions.

An allusion is a reference to another work, concept, or situation which generally enhances the meaning of the work that is citing it. There are many types of allusions, and they may be implicit or explicit, highly limited, or broadly developed. Often, modern readers may miss the context of a particular reference because they have a limited frame of reference. A few common categories of allusion follow: nominal allusions, literary allusions, verbal allusions, mythological allusions, religious allusions and historical allusions.

II-2-2-Nominal Allusions.

This sub-section is devoted to nominal allusions in Wole Soyinka’s plays under analysis. An allusion is nominal when it is based on a name. This may also mean that a nominal allusion drives a cited names in a literary work. Indeed, the presence of a name in a text of literature calls the reader’s attention, especially when it is a well-known name that describes a reality similar to that of the work of fiction. In addition, as the other types of allusions, a nominal allusion is a category in its own right, but it works in such way as to clarify that, these distinctions (historical allusions, literary, mythological, nominal and verbal) are arbitrary. An allusion is, very often, at the same time historical and nominal, satirical or literary. Through our reading of Wole Soyinka’s plays, we discover many examples of nominal allusions.

Names of festivals, rituals and rites are implicitly used in the plays: “carving” in *A Dance of the Forests*; “swamp” in *The Swamp Dwellers*; “Agemo” (p. 149) in *The Road*, and *Kongi’s Harvest* (p. 67); “wedding” (p.) in *The Lion and the Jewel*; “New

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 108.

Yam” (pp. 63, 76, 77, 78, 103, 121) in *Kongi’s Harvest*; “prophesy” in *The Trials of Brother Jero*.

There are names such as “Oro” (p.11), “Baba” (p.35), in *A Dance of the Forests*; “Obeche”, “Ironwood”, “Black Afara”, “Iroko” “Ebony”, “Camwood” (p.172); “Ogun”, a Yoruba pantheon (pp.185, 199); “Oga” (p.185) in *The Road*; “Sango”, another Yoruba pantheon (pp. 22, 28, 47, 54) in *The Lion and the Jewel*; “Okiki” (pp. 28, 30), “Oba Ala” (p. 33), “Ailatu” (p. 36), “Kabiyesi” (pp. 62, 64, 95, 101, 102, 106, 107, 108, 112, 113, 114, 115, 136), “Kadiri” (p. 108) is a Kenyan name for boys with good mind, capable of analyzing, judging and discriminating, “Orisa l’Oba”, (p. 09) in *Kongi’s Harvest*. All these names are Yoruba, except “Kadiri” and they are used, respectively, as names of spirits in Yoruba tradition, and in the context of the conflict between man and spirits, the battle is due to the fact that, in his search for better conditions of life through forest exploitation, digging of roads, agriculture, construction of houses and bridges etc, man destroys the natural habitat of the supernatural forces. Names of spirits and forest trees are: “Oro”, “Obeche”, “Ironwood”, “Black Afara”, “Iroko”, “Camwood”, “Ogun”, “Sango”. In addition, the main issue that Wole Soyinka is framing through these names is, without any doubt, the rational use of forest resources by man. The other names listed above are used for the veneration of the head of the village by the commoners, and of a boss: “Baba”, “Oga” and “Kabiyesi”.

In addition, there are names such as: “The Queen of England” (p. 153) referred to by Salubi in his reply to Samson who mocks him because he has a uniform but no job or driver’s licence, through that reply ‘As I stand so, I am fit to drive the Queen of England’, we read Salubi’s ignorance of the driving licence as the compulsory document to be allowed to drive a car, he thinks, the uniform that he possesses is enough to become what he dreams, we mean a driver for the Queen of England; “every Tom Dick and Harry” a phrase which means everyone, and used by Samson in his question to Particular Joe (a corrupt policeman who asks God blesses the oil companies for bringing out his genius) if everyone can drive tanker even though he is not a veteran driver; “Remembrance Day” (pp. 216-7) a memorial, a special day observed in Commonwealth countries since the end of World War I to remember the members of their armed forces who have died in the line of duty Particular Joe evokes in his reminiscence of Sergeant Burma’s campaign, first of all to answer positively to

Samson's question that everyone can drive tanker, secondly to depict the reality of injustice as to the decoration of a blackman with "the King George Cross" which is a United Kingdom and a Commonwealth medal, and "Victoria Cross" (p. 217) introduced on 29 January 1859 by Queen Victoria to honour act of valour during Crimean War; "Latin for Catholic Church" (p. 217) is a noun phrase used by Samson in his address in pidgin English to Particulars to claim for a true Remembrance Day for his countryman who died in combat, and in through the phrase under consideration, he requires realism in concrete life, and whosoever does not share the same point of view must go to talk "Latin for the Catholic Church" in *The Road*.

The playwright also inserts in his plays names of places that refer to geographical environments, and the four cardinal points. This fact makes us consider these names as allusions; they are used implicitly in the texts, and call the reader's attention, and ask his knowledge about those well-known names. We read them as follows: in *A Dance of the Forests* "Mali. Chaka- Songhai – Glory- Empires" (p. 11), "Mali - Songhai. Lisabi - Chaka" (p. 32) through which Wole Soyinka's play provides contrast, engages in a similar nostalgic and idealized invocation of historic Africa that, there is no tribute to Africa's past glory; additionally, through these names Adenebi curses evenly both Europe and Africa, past and present, we learn that Africa's vaunted past is tyranny; "Troy and Greece" (p. 55) which alludes to an ancient ruined city in NW Asia Minor: the seventh of nine settlements on the site ; besieged by the Greeks for ten years; "Limpopo", "The Nile" (p. 65) which are respectively the river in South Africa , flowing from the Republic of South Africa, through South Mozambique into India Ocean, also called Crocodile River, and for the second, a river in Africa, flowing from Lake Victoria to the Mediterranean, "From Limpopo to the Nile" alludes to African hydrographic network which serves as a stream for the spread of the Egyptian civilisation; "Bukanji" (pp. 89, 94, 101) in *The Swamp Dwellers* is the beggars' village.

In addition, "Lagos Lagoon" (p. 177) which in fact is an example of a tautological place name to the extent that "Lagos Lagoon" shares its name with the city of Lagos, Nigeria, the second largest city in Africa, which lies on its south-west side, the name is Portuguese, and means 'lakes' in the Portuguese language; "Africa" (p. 178), "from Lagos to Monrovia" (p. 180) used by Samson to express his feeling that Kotonu's talent for driving a lorry is depraved by Professor, as there is no pension,

terrible food made of bread and water, and the consequence that he wants to give up with touching any other steering wheel, Kotonu is a very experienced lorry driver, and he is well known all over Africa for driving in a high speed; “Dakar” (p. 212) which is used by Say Tokyo Kid in pidgin English utterance reinforces the idea that Kotonu drives very fast, he does care about any danger, obstacle that may occur as a way for them arriving as quick as possible wherever they go, Samson accuses Kotonu of taking over Segeant Burma’s business who drives a tanker like a tank; “London” (p. 217) is used in “London Matric” which means London Matriculation, the examination that Samson should pass to be admitted as a driver in *The Road*.

As for “Saro” and “Saro Women” (p. 6), they are mentioned by Lakunle in his answer to Sidi, for his plan to modernize the village, create conditions for her make wealth in the manner of Saro women who bathe in gold; this nominal reference reveals historic contradictory changes for women due to the rise of a comprador class; additionally, the Western-educated and Christianized women elite recruited most of its members from the captives of Siera Leone became known as the Saro, and the “Saro Women” (p. 6) shared much with the elites settler women down the coast in Siera Leone.

The expansion of petty trading and cash crop offered some opportunities than others; among the Igbo, an increasing number of women were able to buy titles and to marry as female husbands; but far from becoming wealthy, many women suffered through the era as domestic slavery increased; most slaves continued to be female; “Ibadan” (p. 10) is a city in southwest Nigeria Lakunle refers to it as the ideal modern place for him spend the week-end in night clubs with Sidi; this proposal is part of his strategies to seduce Sidi in *The Lion and the Jewel*.

“Badagry” (p.6) also spelled Badagri is a town and lagoon port in Lagos state, southwest Nigeria, founded in the late 1720s by Popo refugees from the wars with the Fon people of Dahomey, Badagry was, for the next century, a notorious exporter of slaves to the Americas, a British trading post was established there in 1820s, and Badagry developed as a palm-oil port for Egbaland to the north and as an importer of European cloth; in the 1830s it attracted freed slaves from Freetown (Siera Leone); “Sango” (p. 22) in *The Lion and the Jewel*, and (pp. 22, 28, 47, 54) in *Kongi’s Harvest*.

“French territory” (p. 145) in *The Trials of Brother Jero*, especially in the important episode (following the prologue) about dishonesty showed by Brother Jero when he joins the fight to acquire land and very soon quarrels with the Old prophet over the acquired land. The play writes that Brother Jero helped Old Prophet with a campaign led by six dancing girls from the French territory, all dressed as Jehovah’s Witnesses; “the North” (p. 94) in *The Swamp Dwellers*, is one of the four cardinal points, lying in the plane of the meridian and to the left of a person facing the rising sun, and in the play, it stands for the dried region of the country.

The title of a sound and well known book is mentioned in one of the plays under analysis: “Shorter Companion Dictionary” (p. 6) in *The Lion and the Jewel*. The reference to this well-known and sound book determines the level of education, the educational status of the Lakunle, the character who mentions it in the play. The reference to that dictionary means also he has learnt it and finds in it a list fine-sounding words he has used to condemn the payment of the bride price. He has the linguistic resource and information, which he draws from different fields ranging from general science which marks him off among other members of the community.

We also find names that refer implicitly to the religious system and domain: “the Messengers of heaven” (p. 43) in *A Dance of the Forests*, used to show greatness, power, superiority, and to express the need to revenge because Eshuoro mentions this noun phrase in his reaction against the cutting of the Oro tree by Demoke from which Oremole died, so he means the carver could not in any way cut Eshuoro’s tree which is the tallest tree that grows on land, and Eshuoro’s tree is the head that crows the “Messengers of heaven”; “Muhammed”, the Arab prophet and founder of Islam, “prophets” (p. 90), they are all the persons regarded as Muhammed, “Allah” who is the Supreme Being in Islam (pp. 88, 90) in *The Swamp Dwellers*.

As for “Ramadan” (pp. 200, 201) in *The Road*, it is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar; “God” (p. 154), “church, congregation” (p. 163), “the preacher, the name of Jesus Christ”, “the bishop”, “B.D. Bachelor of Divinity” (p. 163), “the wall of Jericho” (p. 163), which are all part of the Christian biblical vocabulary; “Adam”, “the Tree of Life” (p. 167) are associated with the original sin in the Old Testament; “Spirit of Harvest” (pp. 77, 92), “Messiah of pain” (p.99), “My Ruth, my Rachel, Esther, Bathsheba thou sum of fabled perfections from Genesis to the Revelations” (p.19) in *The Lion and the Jewel* are biblical women who respectively:

demonstrate how a woman, seen as vulnerable and powerless can work with others together to ensure justice for themselves and for God's people, demonstrate again and again that God deeply loves these woman who manages to create power for herself, her family, and future even in a society that gives her that little power, exhibit self-respect and courage, and constitute a call to action of us to stand up for equality for woman and all humanity, and refuse to be silenced as they transformed from victims to powerful women who right some of the wrongs they have endured; "Leader's Temptation", "Agony on the Mountains", "The Loneliness of the Pure", "A Saint", "The Face of Benevolence", "The Giver of Life" (p. 93), "Prophets of Agony" (p. 117), "Jesus of Isma", "Messiah", "God's sake" (p. 128) in *Kongi's Harvest* are names, titles and qualifications of Kongi, positively for himself, but negatively even for the members of his group and the all community; "The Brotherhood of Jehu", "the Cherubims", "the Sisters of Judgement Day", "the Heavenly Cowboys", "the Jehovah Witness", "Daughters of Discord", "Daughter of Eve" (p. 146); "cross", "sister...my sister in Christ", "Christ" (p. 150) which for the essential are all mentioned to express Brother Jero's weakness for girls and women, as well as Amope's attitude of strength in his claim for her own money to Brother Jero, it is reflected in his activity like-staging processions and delivering religious speeches to build mass support, hiring professional dancers from France, whom Soyinka ridicules as "*The Sisters of Judgement*" to bribe the Council officers; "Jeroboam. Immaculate Jero" as Jero declares himself, and "Articulate Hero of Christ's Crusade" (pp. 153, 163) used for the piece of land on the beach, which he once helped his master to secure illegally, is now grabbed by himself treacherously.

In addition, "Abraham", "David, David", "Samuel, Samuel", "Job, Job", "Elijah, Elijah" (p. 154), "the tabernacle of Christ" (p.155) is Brother Jero's fraudulent adoption of means and self proclamation as a beach prophet who offers his church service on a place where God actually dwells, the tabernacle is seen as a tented palace for Israel's divine king. He is enthroned on the ark of the covenant in the innermost Holy of Holies (the Most Holy Place). His royalty is symbolized by the purple of the curtains and his divinity by the blue. The closer items are to the Holy of Holies, the more valuable are the metals (bronze→silver→gold) of which they are made. These parallels include the east-facing entrance guarded by cherubim, the gold, the tree of life (lampstand), and the tree of knowledge (the law). Thus God's dwelling in the

tabernacle was a step toward the restoration of paradise, which is to be completed in the new heaven and earth (Revelation 21-22); “Eve, Delilah, Jezebel” (p. 162) who are known as the fallen women of *The Bible* as they respectively disobeyed to God in the Garden of Eden, becoming the symbol for and cause of the inevitable death of every human being since, now, and always; betrayed and sold Samson to the Philistines who could then destroy him; propagated worship of the false god Baal - pagan god of fertility; “Satan” (p. 169) is known as the chief evil spirit, the great adversary of man, the evil which Brother Jero sees in the eyes of Member who, with great pomposity tells him to ‘go and practice his fraudulences to another person of great gullibility’ (p. 168) in *The Trials of Brother Jero*. The utterance of the play in which Brother Jero uses the name ‘Satan’ is: ‘Yes...I think I see Satan in your eyes. I see him entrenched in your eyes...’¹⁵¹. This speech is actually another prophecy, for the position of Minister for War, discovered as a false prophecy by Member, the person this prophecy is addressed to.

What this mean is that, first of all, Brother Jero prophesies for the position of Minister of War, after Member discovered that it was a fraudulence, and then Brother Jero had another vision in which he sees Satan in the eyes of Member, Satan entrenched his eyes. The utterance in which the name “Satan” is used alludes to the biblical passage when Jesus Christ said to his disciples: ‘I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven’ in the context that Jesus sends his disciples in Mission. As soon as they began their work, and along in it, He by his divine omniscience, saw the power of darkness falling before their ministry and miracles; and He also foresaw how Satan hereafter, in a more conspicuous manner, would fall before the preaching of his Gospel by the apostles, and He would give them power to do other miraculous works besides these. Brother Jero’s allusion to Jesus saying modifies the context, the meaning, and the aim. Brother Jero wants to infatuate and victimize the Member of Parliament.

Though this dramatic action, Wole Soyinka shows the reality of false prophets in Nigeria, the different social classes that are infatuated, but he also tells those false prophets that their fraudulences of the present will be discovered by some of the people in the due time because as Abraham Lincoln said: ‘You can fool all the people some

¹⁵¹ Wole Soyinka, “The Trials of Brother Jero” in *Collected Plays 2*, op. cit., p. 169.

of the time, and some of the people all the time, but you cannot fool all the people all the time'.¹⁵²

Names of public administrative office, government department and officials also are on the pages of Wole Soyinka's plays: "The Palace Worker's Union" (p. 35) which Baroka lets the workers to form as a means for him preserving the tradition in which he exists from the constant negative western changes, additionally, Baroka has listened to what the Christian' Holy Book says, he has got his blacksmiths to make a printing press; this shows Baroka's high intelligence and surviving, and as a consequence he wins the girl, which means the triumph of tradition value over Western civilization, in *The Lion and the Jewel*; "Town Council" (p. 145) which is mentioned to reveal the reality that the State itself has become an idol; and there is no officially supported religion and very few people acknowledge religious beliefs. In this context, orthodox religious beliefs and feelings appear to have been transferred to both the State and political leaders; "Police" (165) which Amope calls in a shout, for a help, order and security when her husband Chume, forces her to go home with him on the bike so that he gets the opportunity to beat her up; "MP" which stands for Member of Parliament is referred to show that even politicians are infatuated by Brother Jero's false prophecies in *The Trials of Brother Jero*.

Through our reading of the plays under consideration, we also find titles of officials, and titles fixed to names for worthy of honour and high respect: "Your Majesty", "His Highness", (p. 52) are used by Warrior, Physician, Historian and Slave-Dealer in their addresses to Mata Kharibu, the king, in a flashback-scene far back about eight centuries, possibly more on one of the great empires; in this scene the aspects which are closely linked to these nominal allusions are Mata Kharibu's own decision to sell Warrior, as a slave, he and his men, down the river because he refused to fight the king's unjust war which consists in battling merely to recover the trousseau, the war which is now an affair of honour, the steal of the wife of a brother chieftain; the other aspect is that, Slave-Dealer gives bribe to Historian as he worships him through the title "Honourable Historian" (p. 54) who accepts it from Slave-Dealer as a condition for him being allowed to transport as many slaves as possible in a vessel

¹⁵² <http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/a/abrahamlin110340.html>. (March 2015).

that Physician described as ‘the slight coffin’ (p. 52), and after the bribe taking, Historian testifies that the new vessel is capable of transporting even Mata Kharibu and all his ancestors, and they would be proud to ride in such boat; “Honourable Physician ” (p. 54) agrees with them, in *A Dance of the Forests*; “Prime Minister” (p. 157) which is the first or principal of certain government of the cabinet or ministry¹⁵³ that Brother Jero falsely prophesized for one of his most faithful adherents is going to be in the new Mid-North-East-State – when it is created; “Sanitary Inspector” (p. 164), an officer appointed to look carefully at or over, view closely and critically aspects pertaining to health or the conditions affecting health, especially with reference to cleanliness, precautions against disease Amope the “the hot-mouthed” refers to in his confrontations caused by Brother Jero to the extent that Amope stands at the door of his home because he is his debtor of one pound, eight shillings and nine pence for the velvet he bought to her on contract three months ago; while Amope sieges Jero’s home to collect her money, she has another confrontation with Chume, her husband who wants to bring her back home on a bicycle.

As a consequence, Amope under his anger, strength, admiration for her industry, and desire to succeed resists Chume, and slights to him by referring to her poor condition as a wife and to his job as a Chief Messenger that he should not call a work. In addition, Amope refers to a Sanitary Inspector who came along, looked her all over, made some notes in his book, told her that he supposes, she realizes that the place is marked down for slum clearance, but Chume sits down and let his wife be exposed to such insults. And the Sanitary Inspection had a motor-cycle too, which is better than a bicycle. A Sanitary Inspector is a better job anyway. We find it better to elaborate more a bit on Amope’s positive attitude to work. In fact, she likes it very much, and devotes all his time to do it, but dislikes strongly, and is uncompromised with any attitudes from the outside, to stand in his way when she works. That is why, in his confrontations respectively with Brother Jero and Chume her husband, she throws away all respect for them. And from the point of view of Soyinka as a Yoruba, one aspect of his mother is glimpsed briefly in a discussion about Amope:

...My own mother, for instance, was a terror. Not by nature, but, she was a trader, and I know that even she, who was a rather gentle person, when she got fed up and wanted

¹⁵³ Webster’s *Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language* (London: Random House, 1994).

to collect her debts from her customers – it is no joke – suddenly she was transformed.
¹⁵⁴

In addition, “Minister for War” (p. 169) is another ministerial post Brother Jero falsely prophesized for a Federal back-bencher Member of Parliament who consults the Prophet too because he is after it, in *The Trials of Brother Jero*.

Names of world historical events and programs are also used in one of the plays under consideration: “The Nazi” ¹⁵⁵ shortening of Nazism, or National Socialism, and in full German, Nationalsozialismus, is the ideology and practice associated with the twentieth century German Nazi Party and state as well as other related far-right groups, usually characterized as a form of fascism that incorporates scientific racism and antisemitism. In 1933, Adolph Hitler ¹⁵⁶ became Chancellor of Germany and the Nazis gradually established a one-party totalitarian state, under which Jews, political opponents and other “undesirable” elements were marginalised, harassed and eventually imprisoned and exterminated.

In the play, Wole Soyinka uses the name “Nazi salute” in the stage direction as follows [The carpenters end with a march downstage with stiff mallet-wielding arms pistoning up in *the Nazi salute*]¹⁵⁷ (my emphasis), to show the situation of Kongi who maintains total control over all the instruments of coercion. These instruments of coercion are well established and manifested in the mallet-swinging Carpenters Brigade and in the Superintendent who tyrannizes over the Oba. They are supposed to be dehumanized beings, and as mentioned above, they are in this way, presented as the coercive instruments of a totalitarian regime such as Kongi’s that perpetuates its rule mainly through the use of sheer force. Wole Soyinka’s presentation of Kongi and all his strategies is a satire of the modern dictators in Africa as well as elsewhere. Furthermore, “detention camp” (p. 118) refers to, in the 1914-1918, a camp in which aliens and others were kept under restraint, and Organizing Secretary’s reference to it is based on his awareness that if he fails in the organization of the festival, he as well, will retire in a detention camp instead of in his village, which reinforces the idea of Kongi’s high sense of dictatorship, that he can put everybody in prison except himself.

¹⁵⁴ *Critical Perspectives on Wole Soyinka*, edited by James Gibbs, op. cit., p. 3.

¹⁵⁵ Wole Soyinka, “Kongi’s Harvest” in *Collected Plays 2*, op. cit. p. 116.

¹⁵⁶ http://www.answers.com/Q/When_and_how_did_Adolf_Hitler_become_Chancellor_of_Germany. (March 2015).

¹⁵⁷ Wole Soyinka, “Kongi’s Harvest” in *Collected Plays 2*, op. cit. p. 116.

In this situation, one may see all the people under Kongi's rule physically free, but morally, psychologically, spiritually, etc. in prison; "Field Marshal" (p. 119) which the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* defines as 'the highest ranking officer with a command position'¹⁵⁸ that Organizing Secretary couples with strategies as keys and fundamentals for a successful festival, which in their mind becomes a war or a battle to win as it implicates Captain's 'Strategist and Field Marshal'.

In addition, "Five-Year Development Plan" (pp. 76, 94, 129) a program that Kongi and his followers develop when he takes them to retreat in the mountains so that the New Yam Festival becomes an integrate part of this plan, and bases it on harmony, but also to exercise dominance and control, and Kongi's followers seek to mould their image by adopting the 'remote and impersonal' image of the elders. As a consequence, with this so-called Five-Year Development Plan, the move from traditional rule to modern democracy is a dead letter, which means, it is only in name, Kongi's and its Five-Year Development Plan seeks to eliminate the status quo through the dissemination of doctrine tracts and manifestoes and even through outright subjugation. In addition, through this plan, Kongi's opinion is that, the politico-spiritual well-being of the people resides in him in *Kongi's Harvest*.

II-2-4-Verbal Allusions.

In his book entitled *The Reading and Transformation of Isaiah in Luke*, Peter Mullen writes that a verbal allusion can be defined as an informal reference to an earlier text that repeats a distinctive word or phrase but without using an introductory formula.¹⁵⁹ As for Leppihalme¹⁶⁰ who has been studying allusions and contributed a lot to this area, verbal allusions could be further divided into two groups: proper name allusions (PN) and key phrase allusions (KP). The verbal allusions are in Wole Soyinka's *The Road* and in *The Trials of Brother Jero*.

¹⁵⁸ *Encyclopaedia Britannica or Dictionary of Arts, Sciences and General Literature*, Volumen 13 (Seventh edition, Endinburgh: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1842), p. 121.

¹⁵⁹ Peter Mullen, *The Reading and Transformation of Isaiah in Luke*, (London: T&T Clark International, 2008), p. 24.

¹⁶⁰ Ritva Leppihalme, *Culture Bumps: An Empirical Approach to Translation of Allusion* (Clevedon: Multilingual Master, 1997), p. 3.

To avoid confusion which could appear with the other types of allusions such as historical, religious, literary allusions, verbal allusions are about the moving and modification of letters in a word. The examples of verbal allusions with moving and modification of letters in Wole Soyinka's selected plays are: "AKSIDENT STORE – ALL PART AVAILEBUL" (p. 149) in *The Road*.

In this verbal allusion, typographically, we realize that all letters are capitalized to fulfil the function of emphasis so that it draws the people's attention. As for the modifications, they appear in the word 'AKSIDENT', which in correct English language is 'accident'. This word is spelt and written the way it is pronounced. This breaks also the linguistic principle on the difference between sounds and their spelling. Additionally, the second part of this verbal allusion 'ALL PART AVAILEBUL' is modified to the extent that the word 'PART' misses 's' ending to indicate the plural, and the modified word 'AVAILEBUL' means 'available'.

The displacement of letters in words, their modifications and other lexical situations integrate the concepts of 'assassination of language, linguistic alienation' in Wole Soyinka's *The Road*. Nelson O. Fashina writes that, the sheer linguistic complexity for which Chinweizu et al, Eldred Jones, Osundare, Izevbaye and Margaret Laurence have often accused Wole Soyinka of 'Obscurantism', has made him a linguistic expatriate from both his society and the entire intellectual world. Thus, Soyinka becomes, linguistically, a mental expatriate, or an alien, not only from the world of the mediocres or illiterates, but also in the circle of his fellow intellectuals. In relation to this, a linguist J. F. Wiredu asserts:

Literature may be written to express personal experience or emotions, explain a concept, or simply to educate readers. These are some of the social functions of literature. But a play is art. Therefore, it is structured in such way as to produce aesthetic response in the reader or audience. The important thing about language is its communicability. Any proposition is aimed at a specific end. This end is achieved only when the listener or reader understands the proposition. Thus, communication breaks down if a piece of dramatic work does not easily yield itself to comprehension. It becomes frustrating, indeed.¹⁶¹

The verbal allusion "AKSIDENT STORE – ALL PART AVAILEBUL" under examination means 'Accident Store – All Parts Available'. At the level of semantics, this is a store in which all spare-parts from road accidents are available. In the content

¹⁶¹ J. F. Wiredu, *Comparative Poetics: Soyinka and Mtshali: A Study in Interpretative Stylistics*. Ife Studies in English Language. 3, 2. p. 10.

of the play, we have important information as to the type of store, the type and origin of all parts which are available in the store, and their quality as well.

In fact, *The Road* in which the verbal allusion under consideration is taken from explores the literal and metaphysical aspects of the road. Inhabitation of the deadly road is rendered from the multiple perspectives of the road-users. The 'Aksident Store' is a physical setting and communicates through its usual associations of activities that revolve around the palm-wine feast offered every evening by the Professor, social, spiritual and economic dimensions of the play. The 'Aksident Store' is Professor propriety where loot from wrecks and other goods (that belong to the victims) from road accidents are collected and sold. The 'Aksident Store' opposite Professor's old church. The second part of the verbal allusion is 'all part availebul'. It adds and reinforces the idea of the store which sells everything. To this respect, the 'Aksident Store' is some kind of everything store, all motor spare parts store.

At this level of analysis, we denounce Professor's option and choice of using the old mammy waggon as the store specialized in the sale of things that belonged to victims of road accident he causes himself. Spare parts are also pulled out from cars after accidents, and stocked in his store for sale.

The availability of all parts is guaranteed by the proprietor of the store. But, we think this is only an exaggeration because in a country in which there is not any industry that makes motor spare parts how it can be possible to find a store that sells parts for all models of cars. How it is that from road accident Professor equips his store with all parts. Such a reality is closed to his continual 'Quest' for the 'Word' which he finds 'companion not to life, but Death'¹⁶². We also see in this practice an aspect of the so-called deadly disease of African independence, which is the wrongdoing of African intellectuals who might work for the improvement of the people's conditions of life.

The other verbal allusions are "Je-e-su, J-e-esu, Je-e-esu. [...] Je-e-e-e-su" by Chume, "Abraka, Abraka, Abraka", "Abraka, Abraka, Abraka, Abraka, Abraka, Abraka, Abraka, Abraka, Abraka, Hebra, Hebra, Hebra, Hebra, Hebra, Hebra" by Brother Jero (p. 154) from *The Trials of Brother Jero*.

To begin with Chume's verbal allusion, "Je-e-su, J-e-esu, Je-e-esu. [...] Je-e-e-e-su" is simply the repetition of the proper name 'Jesus'. In the verbal allusion, the name

¹⁶² Wole Soyinka, "The Road" in *Collected Plays I*, op. cit., p. 159.

‘Jesus’ is written with syllables separated by an hyphen. In addition, the name ‘Jesus’ has only two syllables; but in Chume’s verbal allusion this name has more than three syllables. The name ‘Jesus’ is repeated four times. In the first three uses, this name is composed of three syllables separated by an hyphen. Whereas in the fourth use, that is the last repetition it has four syllables also separated by hyphens. The name ‘Jesus’ in Chume’s verbal allusion is longer than in its correct spelling. This is due to the use of the vowel ‘e’ more times. Furthermore, we find this practice from a person, a worshiper put into some kind of trance. In the domain of spirituality, a trance is a temporary state in which a medium, with suspension of personal consciousness is controlled by an intelligence from without and used as a means of communication, as from the dead. Chume’s verbal allusion of the proper name ‘Jesus’ is actually a trance resulting from a pray. In addition, the fact that Chume’s allusion is followed by Brother Jero’s, and then both join in, proves of Jero’s strategy to force Chume and the other believers join him and participate into the trance. Brother Jero’s verbal allusion is “Abraka, Abraka, Abraka”, “Abraka, Abraka, Abraka, Abraka, Abraka, Abraka, Abraka, Abraka, Abraka, Hebra, Hebra, Hebra, Hebra, Hebra, Hebra, Hebra”. This is made up of two words: ‘Abraka’ which is repeated twelve times, and ‘Hebra’ repeated seven times. The word ‘Abraka’ sounds the shortening and the modification of ‘abracadabra’ which is a spiritual word used in incantations, on amulets, etc., as a magical means of warding off misfortune, harm, or illness.¹⁶³

In addition, the word ‘Hebra’ is the verbal allusion of the proper name ‘Hebrew’. As clear as it may appear, these uttered phrases do not actually mean anything. If they do at some level, it is only to show that Brother Jero is manipulating his clients and cleverly mocking them.

II-2-4-Mythological Allusions.

Mythological allusions offer meaningful relations concerning the country’s indigenous culture or a reference to another culture’s mythology. They are brief passing references to something mythological that is commonly understood by the viewer, reader or listener. In *Webster’s Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language* the term mythology is defined as a body of myths, as that of a

¹⁶³ *Webster’s Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language* (London : Random House, 1994).

particular people, or that relating to a particular person. Additionally, this term mythology is used to denote either the study of myths or, loosely myths themselves. In this regards, a myth is a traditional story usually concerning some superhuman being, some alleged person or event, with or without a determinable basis of fact or a natural explanation, especially a traditional or legendary story that is concerned with deities and the creation of the world and its inhabitants. A myth is also an unapproved collective belief that is accepted uncritically and is used to justify a social institution. To this effect, mythology is inseparable from society because one of its rule is that whatever happens amongst the gods or other mythical beings was in one sense or another a reflection of events on earth. In relation to this, Emile Durkheim states that, god is another name for society, for humans make their god in their own image.¹⁶⁴ The term mythology and myths can be used interchangeable in the sense that mythology is the body of myths belonging to a culture. The main characters in myths are gods, supernatural heroes and humans.

In his plays, Wole Soyinka makes much use of myths to express his ideas. Soyinka's works are distinguished by their exploration of the African world view, and are steeped in Yoruba mythology. The characters also have mythological dimensions. The ideas that Soyinka expresses through the use of mythology constitute his own approach to liberate black African people from their subordination to European imperialism, colonization and neo-colonialism. The use of Yoruba mythology in Soyinka's postcolonial dramatic works fulfils the function of resistance and counter-discourse against the dominant colonialist discursive system.

In addition, to evoke mythology in the African context, for a long time before African nations won political independence from their European colonizers, African culture was misunderstood and misrepresented. Words such as savage, primitive, sub-human group, slaves, dark continent, mentally inferior, incapable, lowest of all races, were used to describe them by foreign scholars and philosophers such as Voltaire, David Hume, Emmanuel Kant, Montesquieu, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke and Jean Jacques Rousseau. The views of these philosophers guided European colonizers. When these nations won their independence, they undertook to reexamine the

¹⁶⁴ <http://www.answers.com/topic/celtic-mythology>. (March 2015).

institution by which they had been governed, and also the image of their culture that had long been advertised by outsiders. The aim was to demonstrate that Africa has had, since time immemorial, traditions that should be respected and a culture to be proud of. This may also mean that through the use of Yoruba mythology, Wole Soyinka envisioned a new Africa that would escape its colonial past by grafting the technical advances of the present into the stock of its own ancient past. Wole Soyinka's allusions to mythology seeks to reformulate and accommodate contemporary reality so that they serve as the foundation stone of the future. At this level, Soyinka's view through the use of Yoruba mythology sounds the philosophy that counters the white man's unjustified and unproved superiority over the black people, both in the minds of the white men and in the black people's, duly those who face the dilemma of choosing between their ancestor's heritage and the material values from Western countries.

In addition, Soyinka's mythological allusions serve the quest for moral regeneration and reinforcement. He uses Yoruba mythology to awaken black consciousness regarding their changing society under Western culture's influence and to help Africans renew with their cultural values. In plain words, Soyinka resorts to Yoruba mythological allusions as an examination and assertion of African cultural values, and a resistance to European indoctrination of African society.

In order to prove these cultural roles, we analyze the Yoruba mythological allusions in four plays by Wole Soyinka: *A Dance of the Forests*, *The Road*, *The Lion and the Jewel* and *Kongi's Harvest*. The types of Yoruba mythology used in these plays include: the creation myths, myths of eschatology and destruction and myths of high being and celestial gods.

Each type of mythology has the so-called cause-effect relationship with other types. This situation does not help elaborate on one type alone. The mythology of creation is linked to the mythology of eschatology, destruction, high being and celestial gods. The reason for this is that Ogun, for example exhibits two significant aspects of his personality: a positive side represented by his innovation, benevolence, and creativity; and a negative side of violence, destruction; he is a god-character. These mythologies fulfil the functions of explanation and justification or validation of

principles, be them moral, cultural, social, religious, political, etc. In relation to the functions of mythology, Mircea Eliade argued that, it establishes models for behavior.¹⁶⁵ By telling or reenacting mythology, members of traditional societies detach themselves from the present and return to the mythical age, thereby bringing themselves closer to the divine. Similarly, Lauri Honko asserts that, in some cases, a society will reenact a myth in an attempt to reproduce the conditions of the mythical age.

Let us now try to analyze the Yoruba mythology that Wole Soyinka alludes to in some of his plays. We emphasize the typology of mythology, the play in which it is used, and their functions as well.

To begin with the creation mythology, that is also the cosmogony mythology, we write that it refers to the origin of the world in a neutral fashion, and also to something created. The creation or cosmogony mythology is used in *A Dance of the Forests* with the purpose of fulfilling the function of explanation of facts and conditions that contribute to the creation of a new nation. Reading through intertextual variations in this play, and at this level of analysis reveals that, the gathering of the tribes is the mythological allusion to the Yoruba creation mythology. The reason for this is that, the gathering of the tribes and its organization makes use of scattered elements of the universe, symbols with the essence of Yoruba culture. We refer to the forest that is the setting of the celebration, the so needed totem, the characters composed of gods, deities, spirits, other creatures, and human beings. When we take into account Wole Soyinka's literary creativity at this level, we see in this the mythology of the gathering of the tribes, which can be used interchangeably with the mythology of the totem, or the mythology of the humans, the supernatural, the dead and the unborn.

The action of the play that mentions this mythological allusion tells about the human community composed of characters such as Demoke, Rola, Adenebi and Obaneji. They are celebrating the gathering of the tribes. They have requested the presence of illustrious dead people from their past, the 'builders of empires' and 'descendants of 'great nobility' in order to celebrate all that is 'noble in our nation.'¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁵ <http://comminfo.rutgers.edu/~mjoseph/eliade.html>. (March 2015).

¹⁶⁶ Wole Soyinka, "A Dance of the Forests" in *Collected Plays I*, op. cit., p. 31.

But the spirits sent two restless souls to the surface: a Dead Man and a Dead Woman, both victims of the same glorious past, to confront the descendants of their killers. As things do not go according to their wish, the human characters complain that they ask statesman and they were sent accusers.

In addition, this part of action has some kind of allegorical overtones in regards to the composition of the characters, the setting and the ideas conveyed. This is actually a mythology, especially a Yoruba creation mythology that Wole Soyinka uses as his own approach to the creation of a new nation. The essential idea is first of all a true unity without any exclusion of people, be them wrongdoers, then the participation of the ancestors from the past, the spirits, as well as the gods in the organization of the extraordinary gathering of the tribes to bridge the chasm between them, next a correct reading of past events: good and negative happenings, justice, forgiveness, collective consciousness, etc. As clear as it may appear, Soyinka's Yoruba imaginary mythology of the gathering of the tribes fulfils the function of creating a new nation. This is the mythology of the people's awareness of all the mistakes of the past so that history does not repeat itself.

The gathering of the tribes is an entity in Soyinka's Yoruba creative mythology. He draws it upon for the aesthetics of his literary work under consideration. The gathering of the tribes as the mythological allusion to the Yoruba cosmology that Soyinka exploits in his play is an aesthetic feature because he successfully makes the gathering of the tribes a mythological allusion of the Yoruba cosmology, and corresponds it to the birth, creation of a new nation. This narrative technique distinguishes him from other writers.

The next mythological allusion in Wole Soyinka's plays may present multiple references. It includes at the same time the mythology of creation, eschatology and destruction. This is the mythology of Ogun. It fulfils the functions of creation, explanation and validation. The mythology of Ogun is used in the four plays selected accordingly.

In *A Dance of the Forests*, the mythology of Ogun can be identified to the mythology of the totem. The characters are the human beings Demoke and Oremole, his apprentice who does appear in the entrance of the play, but is only mentioned,

Ogun the god of creativity and Eshuoro, the god of destruction, and Oro, the Yoruba god of punishment and death who is only mentioned through the tree sacred to him. The mythology of Ogun is closely linked to the mythology of the gathering of the tribes. In fact, to celebrate the historic gathering of the tribes Demoke the carver in wood might carve the totem. His inability to climb the tree and cut it to carve the totem leads his apprentice Oremole who, from the top of the tree mocks at Demoke. He pulls Oremole off the top of the araba tree that they were carving together. Demoke kills his apprentice Oremole. As a consequence, Eshuoro seeks vengeance for the death of Oremole, a devotee of Oro. Ogun, the patron god of carvers, defends Demoke. Ogun is an important deity, he is a protector of orphans, roof of the homeless, the terrible guardian of the sacred oath; he stands for a transcendental, human but rigidly restorative justice. Demoke, servant to Ogun is a literal reality, he is human and he appears in person and is material while Ogun is a god, he is intangible and abstract. Demoke is in several ways like his master Ogun. Demoke is endowed with special gift of creativity for which Ogun is renown. Eshuoro and Oro are gods, they are not represented as positive.

The facts mentioned above about the story in *A Dance of the Forests* are actually a mythological allusion to the Yoruba mythology. Characters like Eshuoro and Ogun are based on gods inspired from mythology. Additionally, in the Yoruba mythology, the gods are believed to inhabit trees, it is the case of Oro and the araba tree in the play. The Yoruba mythological issue finds a place in this play through the belief of transition from the human to the divine essence. The mythological allusion that involves Ogun and Demoke against Eshuoro, Oro and Oremole explains the antagonism between the gods, and the humankind. According to the Yoruba mythology, Wole Soyinka assigns the roles of creativeness and destructiveness to Ogun, Eshuoro, and Oro. In *Myth, Literature and the African World*, Wole Soyinka focusses on the importance of Ogun. Soyinka's allusion to Yoruba gods is very essential. This fact is an important aspect of African Negro aesthetics. Through the mythological allusion to Ogun which is based on the binary forces - Ogun's destructive and creative forces, Wole Soyinka wants the human being be aware of their condition in order to better face socio-political problems.

Furthermore, the mythological allusion of creation in Wole Soyinka's *A Dance of the Forests* passes also through the mythology of reincarnation, a phenomenon which invites allegorical interpretation. At this level of analysis, we specifically refer to the mythology of Wole Soyinka that describes reincarnation as allegorical. Reincarnation is a necessary implication of the doctrine of reminiscence. Plato believed that people have latent knowledge of the forms which can be remembered. This implies they have the forms previous to this lifetime. In this respect, the mythology of reincarnation means the mythology of recounting past life memories. In fact, past life regression is a technique whereby people are induced into a hypnotic trance-like state. They are guided by a hypnotherapist to search for memories of past lives causing them remember accurate details of preceding events through the process of the spiritual possession. In addition, past life regression therapy is also about people who have lived past lives in the future. This supports the concept of eternity where past, present and future are said to exist simultaneously in completeness.

The action of *A Dance of the Forests* in which Wole Soyinka alludes to the mythology of reincarnation, that is also the mythology of recounting past life memories and future life follows the critical situation in the play in which good is contested against evil. The mythology under consideration is in the mime scene with the atmosphere of interrogation. This scene is peopled by characters from underworld or the world of the dead. In addition, a volley off questions follow, revelations commence with the voices of reincarnated figures, an interpreter figure assists in further developments until an elaborate group of spirits speak out their prophecies. There is the Spirit of the Palm who speaks of punishment for those who have sinned. That is the essence of his exclamation: 'I, Spirit of the Palm/ Now course I red. / I who suckle blackened hearts, know/ Heads will fall down, / Crimson in their red!' (p. 64).

The Spirit of Darkness joins in and speaks of the doomed. He said: 'I, Spirit of the Dark, / Naked they breathe me, / foretelling now/ How, by the dark of peat and forest/ They'll be misled/ And the shutters of the leaves/ Shall close down on the doomed/ And naked head.' (p. 65) In addition, the Spirit of the Precious stones says how it promises eternal wealth but in the very next instance, deludes or incites lust in order to be fool and deceive. He says: 'Still do I draw them, down/ Into the pit that

glitters, I/ Spirit of gold and diamonds/ Mine is the vain light courting death/ A-ah! Blight this eye that threaded/ Rocks with light, earth with golden lodes/ Traitor to the guardian tribe, / Turn to lead! (p. 65) Then, the Spirit of Pachyderms complains of the theft of ivory in the following terms: "Blood that rules the sunset, bathe/ This, our ivory red/ Broken is the sleep of giants/ Wanton raiders, ivory has a point/ Thus, thus we bled." (p. 65) After, the Spirit of the Rivers repents for the lust of human beings in exploiting the environment. He says, "From Limpopo to the Nile coils but one snake./ On mudbanks, and sandy bed/ I who mock the deserts, shed a tear/ Of pity to form palm-ringed oases/ Stain my bowels red! (pp. 65-6) As for the Spirit of the Sun, he complains of an untimely eclipse while the Spirit of the Volcanoes says that he has lost the capacity to emit larva. Last but not least, there is an Ant Leader who complains that his race is perpetually tramped under foot by humans.

The action described above from *A Dance of the Forests* is actually a mythology of creation. It also sounds allegorical. The ideas we have mentioned earlier are readable. This action presents a group of reincarnated characters (all of them are Spirits) recounting their past life memories and their past life regression. They are actually induced into a hypnotic trance-like state, and guided by the hypnotherapist, Ant Leader (who narrates their dilemmas) and Forest Head (who is there to supervise the programme of listening to them) to search for memories of past lives causing them remember accurate details of preceding events through the process of the spiritual possession. Their past life regression therapy is also about people who have lived past lives in the future.

The mythological allusion about the mythology of creation which passes through the mythology of reincarnation, past life regression and past life regression into the future analyzed above fulfils a twofold functions: explanation and revalidation. The function of explanation is fulfilled to the extent that it explains the importance of understanding the African cosmological union between the living, the dead, and the spirits that control the African universe. As for the function of revalidation, it is fulfilled in the sense that through this mythological allusion the African background, culture, belief systems, forests and groves setting are presented as they had always been from the beginning of times. In addition, the peoples are asked to rebirth in their conscience to protect and preserve them.

Furthermore, mythological allusions are also used in *The Road*. The type of mythology Wole Soyinka uses in this play is the mythology of eschatology and destruction in the sense that it deals with the end, but not, in a wider sense, the end of the world in *The Road*. This type of mythology in *The Road* means first and foremost the origin of death. The mythology of eschatology and destruction in the context of *The Road* means the mythology of death. It is about the origin of death, for which an added explanation has to be found in the sense that death is not seen as automatically the end of life. In Wole Soyinka's *The Road*, the mythology of eschatology explains the inexistence of death in the primordial time, and that, death arose as the result of an error, as punishment, or simply because the creator decided the earth would get too crowded otherwise.

The keys to our understanding of the mythological dimension in *The Road* is first of all the fact that this play is prefaced by a poem, entitled "Alagemo" which alludes to the dissolution of the flesh that occurs when a person passes from physical to spiritual essence. Secondly, Ogun, the god of war, death and roads is ever present in *The Road*. He dominates the play with his presence. Ogun provides the ideal for Soyinka's heroes. In the play *The Road*, the basic conflict opposes man to destiny, that is also opposed to tradition. The two actions of *The Road* in which we find indications of death mythology involve three characters Professor, Ogun and Murano. All of them take part in the first series of events in the play, whereas, in the second death mythology action, there are only two characters from the previous group: Professor and Ogun. These two characters are joined by Say Tokyo Kid.

To begin with the first action, we find it important to mention that it is about the death of Murano in *The Road*. Wole Soyinka himself says that Murano represents the suspension of death. He is a mute and personal servant to the Professor. The later and his followers conduct a kind of communion, not to confuse with that administered in a church. They shared palm-wine served by Murano. While he is taking part in a religious feast in honour to Ogun, Murano is possessed by god. He runs across the road. He runs over Kotonu, who is driving a lorry, and is unable to apply the brakes on time. Professor is happy to keep Murano with him, as he feels that Murano is close to death. In that state of being possessed by god, Murano has been stuck and knocked down by Kotonu's lorry.

We find it important to mention that, in the action above from the *The Road*, and about the death of Murano, the message that Wole Soyinka conveys is the inevitability of the temporary transition between life and death. This appears clear that, this action taken in the context of the mythology of death, which is our concern in this subsection, explains that death arose because the creator decided the earth would get too crowded otherwise.

Above all, there are a certain number of aspects to point in this action about Murano's death. First of all, he is possessed when he has been serving the palm-wine to the community of Professor and his companions; the palm-wine he serves is of great importance in the worship of Ogun; when he is possessed, Professor feels that Murano is closed to death, but he is happy to keep him; the Professor himself is never possessed; Murano dies on a road accident, and Ogun is the god of road; etc. From these observations, we find out the situation of weakness on Murano, and strong-mindedness on the side of Professor and Ogun. They seem to have the control of Murano's life and decided on the day and hour of his death.

As for the second action, it deals with Professor death. In fact, in *The Road* the character of the Professor is on a quest to find "the Word." This obsession with the search for the knowledge of death ultimately leads to the Professor's destruction. The Professor attempts to discover the Word by all means of destruction. He is a proprietor of the Aksident Store where he sells motor spare parts and other things, even blood spotted clothes of the victims, he collects from a road accident. He removes road sign which causes accidents. He forges driving licenses. He drinks palm-wine excessively like a fish and mismanages the church funds, which leads him be expelled from the church.

In addition, the wrongdoings that cause the Professor's death are those closely linked to his commerce of spare parts in his own Aksident Store. In relation to this practice, we consider the character of Say Tokyo Kid; he is a timber-truck driver and captain of thugs. In the action of the play, we meet him when a policeman, Chief-in-Town comes to look for thugs to hire. Then, the thugs have an accident, and Say Tokyo Kid, one of them is abandoned in the bush by his terrified men who do not realize he is still alive. Later, Say Tokyo Kid resurfaces, pouring contempt on his men, and then

in the final scene, where Professor has everyone stupefied with fear by forcing them to participate in the Ogun masquerade dance of death, Say Tokyo Kid resists him boldly. He then, inadvertently, kills Professor in the course of a scuffle over a knife on his back. Professor falls dying as the play ends.

The action above from *The Road* actually deals with the eschatological mythology, the mythology of destruction, that is also the mythology of death. In this story the situation of the characters is very different from the one described in the first action: Murano dies in a dance masquerade to Ogun after he has been possessed by the god; he dies during the driver's festival, that is also Ogun's feast because he is the god of roads; this may also mean, Murano's death increases, both Professor and Ogun's happiness. Whereas, in the second action about the mythology of death, Say Tokyo Kid resists the Professor, refuses to participate in the masquerade dance of death. That is the way he saves his own life, but now, kills the Professor by plunging him a knife on his back. Professor falls dead. This situation places Say Tokyo Kid above Murano and the Professor. Ogun remains the god of death who feeds himself from blood. The masquerade dance of death has power over Murano and the Professor, but not over Say Tokyo Kid.

The mythology of eschatology, destruction or death in *The Road*, and through the second action described above, fulfils the function of punishment. In this regards, death is explained as the result of an error. We see the Professor's death as the intervention of Ogun for the purpose of annihilating all the menaces the people undergo. In their turn, the people who wants to get at the truth must surrender themselves to Ogun, even at the risk of their lives. In addition, the relation that Ogun draws between death and life is revealed in the sense that, he accepts death be the prelude to life. To raise the equivoque, Ogun is not in favor of death as a result of political violence and carelessness.

Furthermore, the Professor social statute and his ignoble practices call our attention, and thing about the possible message that Wole Soyinka, the writer of *The Road* conveys. In fact, the Professor stands for civilization and literacy. He has the power of the Word, and this power sustains him above his fellows, and leads him to a kind of institutionalized corruption. At this level, Wole Soyinka through his literary

creativity, which makes himself be guided by Ogun the god of creativity, satirizes the behavior and actions of the Professor, in the play, and of all the leaders be them political, religious, military, administrative, etc. In the same time he calls for the awakening of consciousness on the side of all the ordinary people to resist in the manner of Say Tokyo Kid. In so doing, we see Wole Soyinka using the performative art, drama, to shape and regenerate the culture and political identity of the people and the nation.

We find it also important to evoke the relevance of Wole Soyinka through the above action from *The Road* under consideration in the perspective of both postcolonial concepts of art and political, and cultural self-projections by nations in a postcolonial situation. It comes out that Wole Soyinka in this text, contextualizes colonialism as a matter of modern history and allows art and culture to go beyond and deeper into the innate human soul to find its sources of creation. The colonized peoples must not always be seen as only existing in opposition to a colonial force. The self-definition of a culture can also arise out of its own cosmic history.

Furthermore, mythological allusions are also used in *The Lion and the Jewel*. In this play Wole Soyinka alludes to the Yoruba mythology of Ogun and Sango. The part of the play in which allusions are made to these deities implicate the following characters: Sidi, Girl and Sadiku. The three characters' discourses integrate the central theme of the play, that is to say, modernity versus tradition. In fact, Sidi, a beautiful young girl of the village is courted by Baroka, the old man of the village, and Lakunle, a young school teacher. The exact passages of the play in which Soyinka alludes to Yoruba pantheon of gods Ogun and Sango involves the characters swearing and telling the truth. In fact, Sidi asks the Girl if what she says is the truth that she has seen Sidi's photograph published in a Western magazine, and if it is, she might swear, and ask Ogun to strike her dead. Additionally, the Girl assures her that she tells the truth, and she herself the Girl, swears Ogun strikes her dead if she lies.

In addition to this, in the scene Sadiku courts Sidi for her husband, Sidi's acts make Sadiku to pray to the God Sango to restore her sanity. She says, "May Sango restore your wits. For most surely some angry god has taken possession of you".¹⁶⁷

The situations that we have described above refer to mythological allusions in the extent that, the characters, in their appeals to the Yoruba gods Ogun and Sango swear their own determination to speak the truth, and keep their promise. These two gods Ogun and Sango are usually invoked by the Yoruba in oaths. Ogun is the god of oaths and justice. In Yoruba courts, devotees of the faith swear to tell the truth by kissing a machete sacred to Ogun. The Yoruba consider Ogun fearsome and terrible in his revenge; they believe that if one breaks a pact made in his name, swift retribution will follow. As far as Sango is concerned, she is considered as god of thunder and lightning; his anger is sudden and terrible. She tricks his enemies down with lightning. The Yoruba believe that only Sango can relive the people who behave abnormal, possessed by any angry or evil spirit.

The functions that these mythological allusions to the gods Ogun and Sango fulfil in the play are explanation and revalidation of truthfulness as a virtue, a quality, a moral obligation, a strict adherence to a policy of honesty and openness. Wole Soyinka himself thinks that the Yoruba deities are truthful. Truthful in the sense of that he considers religion and the construct of deities simply an extension of human qualities. He mistrusts gods who become so separated from humanity that enormous crimes can be committed in their names. He prefers gods who can be brought down to earth and judged.

The last mythological allusion also refers to Ogun in *Kongi's Harvest*. But, in this play, the name of the deity, Ogun is not mentioned in the entrance of the play as the name of the character; nor is it evoked by the character. The action itself and our own literary sensibility tell us that in this part of the play, allusion is made to Ogun. In fact, the action of the play, *Kongi's Harvest* under consideration, is about Daodu and his mistress Segi. They are planning a coup themselves, and are scheduled to take off at the moment of the handing over of the New Yam, but the scheme of things is disturbed. Daodu's intention is not just to introduce new ideas, but also to pave the way for

¹⁶⁷ Wole Soyinka, "The Lion and the Jewel" in *Collected Plays 2*, op. cit., p. 22.

destroying those forces which block progress. In so doing, Daodu actually acts as the mouthpiece for a saviour god. The unnamed god might be Ogun because the period is the harvest season, the season of Ogun whose favorite foods are yam, palm-wine, etc. In this action of the play, Daodu represents Ogun.

The fact of making allusion to the deity Ogun comes to be a mythological allusion. It fulfils the function of explanation to the extent that Daodu who represents Ogun engages in the process of destroying Kongi's negative forces that block the road to progress. He places himself in the perspective of educating Kongi.

II-2-5-Historical Allusions.

Historical allusions can be used in works of literature to refer to events or people in a way that makes the events or characters of a work more relatable, and historical allusions often depend on the writer or speaker understanding, his or her audience.

To begin with the terms ‘ ‘ Mali. Chaka- Songhai – Glory- Empires’ ’ (p. 11), ‘ ‘Mali - Songhai. Lisabi - Chaka’ ’, they are used in *A Dance of the Forests* as an historical allusion to the glory of the African past. They are closed to the action of the play, centered on the ‘ ‘Gathering of the Tribes,’ ’ a grand assemblage of a people in the festive circumstance – not too difficult to discern as an ‘ ‘Independence Day’ ’ – type celebration. In addition, this is the occasion for the nation to recall historic heroism of the sort that will inspire them for the future. The phrase historic heroism exclusively refers to the category of people that make the glory so talked about. In this regards, the play describes their need as follows:

We must bring home the descendants of our great forebear. Find them. Find the scattered sons of our proud ancestors. The builders of empires. The descendants of our great nobility. Find them here. If they are halfway across the world, trace them. Bring them here. If they are in hell, ransom them. Let them symbolize all that is noble in our nation of rejoicing. Warriors. Sages. Conquerors. Builders. Philosophers. Mystics. Let us assemble them around the totem of the nation and we will drink from their resurrected glory.¹⁶⁸

The passage above from the play emphasizes the remembrance, resurrection and the need for builders of empires mentioned in the historic allusion under

¹⁶⁸ Wole Soyinka, ‘ ‘A Dance of the Forests’ ’ in *Collected Plays I*, op. cit. p. 31.

consideration. To elaborate a bit more on each of them, the Mali Empire dated from the early thirteenth century to the late fifteenth century. The empire was founded by Sundiata Keita, and became renowned for the wealth of its rulers. The Mali Empire had many profound cultural influences on West Africa, allowing the spread of its language, laws and customs along the Niger River. As far as Songhai is concerned, it had asserted its own independence over Mali's power, and had risen to power in the area. Songhai has been an important trade center within Mali's empire. Great Songhai kings such as Sunni Ali Ber and Askia Mohammed Toure had extended the Songhai kingdom farther than Ghana or Mali. It was the largest and most powerful kingdom in medieval West African. The riches of gold and salt mines drew invaders.

As for the Chaka Empire, it resulted from the transformation of the zulu tribe, a small clan into the beginnings of a nation that held a way over the large portion of Southern Africa. Its leader was Shaka Zulu c. 1787- c. 22 September 1828. His military prowess and destructiveness have been widely studied. One *Encyclopaedia Britannica*'s article asserts that he was something of a genius for his reforms and innovations. His statesmanship and vigour in assimilating some neighbours and ruling by proxy marks him as one of the greatest of the Zulu chieftains.

The historic facts mentioned above, and in relation to the glory of the African past cannot be subjected to any doubt. The problem is that, limiting the allusion to only these positive facts would be detrimental to the complete knowledge of the history of these empires. The reason for this is that, apart from all that is positive and tells the rise of these empires, there are other facts that prove the collapse, fall of the same empires. To be clear, Mali and Songhai are the two medieval kingdoms of West Africa that collapsed for similar reasons despite their greatness. Risen under the legendary king named Sundiata, the small states it had conquered broke off, and the Mali Empire crumbled after Sundiata's death because his son could not hold the empire together. As for the Songhai Empire, in the late sixteenth century a Moroccan army attacked the capital, and the Songhai Empire already weakened by internal political struggles, went into decline. To this respect, we write that Demoke, Rola and Adenebi, all, characters in *A Dance of the Forests* should not reduce the history of the country to positive events, happenings, etc. alone. The telling and the writing of the country's history must take into account all the events, be them positive or/and negative.

The concept history means a story about the past that is significant and true. In addition, the goal of history is to tell a story about the past which captures the essence of an event while omitting superfluous details, and the past being fixed – no one can change what happened. Most historians use the word “true” to mean any perspective well supported by facts. A history that is true and significant is important because it helps people to understand who they are. In this regards, it is evident that people who control the past control the future. Their view of history shapes the way they view the present, and therefore, it dictates answers they offer for existing problems.

Wole Soyinka actually releases on history. That is why in the so-important historical section of *A Dance of the Forests*, he calls for an evocation of the truth of the past which is quite different from the Old Man, Adenebi, Rola, and Demoke’s proposal for the invitation of attendants to “Gathering of the Tribes” through their limited approach to the understanding of their histories. Our literary sensibility makes us consider that Wole Soyinka’s allusion to this historical reality fulfils the function of clearly pushing for an understanding of the histories that are less illustrious. The fact of acknowledging only the histories that are glorious but falling to realize the stories that are less honorable even shameful, the society is harming itself by repeating past mistakes.

Furthermore, in the line that represents time, the historic allusion about the glorious empires under investigation is placed within the pre-colonial period. To this respect, Wole Soyinka through the text of course, reveals the complexity of Africa’s pre-colonial conditions. These conditions contributed to the fragmentation of African society. As we have mentioned it above, the characters concerned are Rola, Demoke and Adenebi. Through them it seems clear that we see the problems of history making manifest at the moment of independence. Wole Soyinka expresses the kind of relations he wishes to draw between the old and the new. What he understands and reveals is that, the arrival of European colonialists in the African continent only exacerbated the problem of nation. In this regards, Soyinka counter argues Fanon assertion that is “decolonization is truly the creation of new men”¹⁶⁹ when he thinks that decolonization only reveals the same men. In addition, the process of the independence

¹⁶⁹ Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 2004), p. 2.

struggle had already thrown up ominous signs of inequities that would detribalize a newly freed entity – a familiar tendency toward self – attrition, once the external enemy is gone. We mean, that history was that of African's culpability in the enslavement of her own kind.

Above all, the essential is that there are two different ways of understanding the past of Africa. The characters in the play express themselves freely through their historic allusion to great empires to mean that the past of Africa is glorious. Those characters are only Soyinka's literary creations. They stand for the people who embody this thinking. Wole Soyinka sees in this, a very limited understanding of the reality. He considers that, African past is a sadly inglorious one.

Furthermore, the historic allusion to Mali. Chaka - Songhai – Glory- Empires" (p. 11), "Mali - Songhai. Lisabi - Chaka" from *A Dance of the Forests* does not make a restriction as far as the aspect of place is concerned. It goes beyond Nigeria and embraces the whole black nation. The concept "gathering of the tribes" is used to cover all the "Warriors. Sages. Conquerors. Builders. Philosophers. Mystics" from as far back into the black race as possible.

We also see that the imagery moves even beyond the black race. In fact, in the court of Mata Kharibu the Court Historian proudly cites the Trojan War fought as a justification of the tyrant's capricious war over Madame Tortoise. The play writes that Mata Kharibu has stolen the woman of another man. He decides that the slighted man must return her wardrobe to her. When he refuses, Mata Kharibu declares war. Descriptions of the Trojan War would likely act as an historical allusion to the battle between the people of Greece and the people of the city of Troy. Prince Paris of Troy abducted the wife of Menelaus of Sparta (Helen), and refused to return her. Then, Agamemnon, brother of Menelaus, gathered troops to attack the Trojans. The battle raged nine years, and although the Greeks destroyed Trojan territory.

At this level, through the historical allusion to the Trojan War, Wole Soyinka reveals and satirizes the immoral and unhuman actions of African kings who, for their own sentimental concerns mobilizes the kingdom army to fight a war. How a king can abduct a wife of another man. The other aspect that Wole Soyinka denounces is such a negative freedom that a king enjoy to do whatever he wants. Soyinka sees that

African kings enjoy absolute divine right. In this respect, Soyinka suggests the principle of the rule of law, constitutionalism and democracy.

Furthermore, the common noun ‘‘slave’’ and the character’s name ‘‘Slave Dealer’’ are historical allusions to slavery, that is also the slave trade. In *A Dance of the Forests*, the event in which we read descriptions of this unhuman practice is linked to the historical section. In fact, the slave trade in the play begins when the Warrior refuses to fight Mata Kharibu’s unjust war. This decision from the soldier that he does not want to serve an unjust master leads Mata Kharibu to see him as a possible danger because the germ of freedom may contaminate the other soldiers loyal to him. As a consequence, the Warrior is castrated and sold as a slave.

The reading of the play reveals that this happened before the colonial period. To this respect, through this historical allusion Wole Soyinka reveals the existence of slavery in Africa before Britain and other European powers arrived. In the above – mentioned so-called African glorious empires: Mali, Songhai and Soudan rulers had thousands of slaves who worked as servants, soldiers and farm workers. There existed such a cooperation between villages in the matter of providing captives not to sell, but for local use. In 1400s, however, the British and the other Europeans introduced a new form of slavery that devastated African life and society. The displaced African people to the Caribbean are double victims of that devastation.

Furthermore, the name ‘‘Badagry’’ is also a historical allusion to the infamous Atlantic slave trade in Africa. In fact, ‘‘Badagry’’ was an important slave route in West Africa. In the early 1500’ s, slave were transported from West Africa to America through Badagry. It is reported that Badagry exported no fewer than 550, 000 African slaves to America during the period of American Independence in 1787. European slave buyers made the greater profit from the despicable trade, but their Nigerian partners also prospered. When Britain abolished the slave trade in 1807, it not only had to content with opposition from white slavers but also from Nigerian rulers who had become accustomed to wealth gained from selling slaves or from taxes collected on slaves passed through their domain. The slave trade business continued in many parts of Africa for many decades after the British abolished it. A part from this action, *A Dance of the Forests* writes about a new form of slave trade in Africa. In fact, we

refer to the Physician's complain about that the Slave-Dealer's ship is too small to carry the condemned Warrior and his sixty men. The dealer assures that he now has a new vessel capable, when time comes, of transporting the whole of Mata Kharibu's court to hell.

Reading through this part of the play reveals Wole Soyinka's suggestion that the 'new' ship in which Mata Kharibu and all his ancestors would be proud to ride represents modern form of slavery that African leaders are blindly accepting.

The next historical allusion is 'Saro women'. Wole Soyinka alludes to them to focus on East and southern Africa, tracing women's history from earliest times to the present. In addition, this allusion is an exploration of women's place in social, economic, political, and religious life. It highlights the changing societal position of women through shifts over time in ideas about gender and the connections between women's public and private spheres. This seems evident that Soyinka's direct allusion to 'Saro women' is also an examination of the status and activities of women in West and Central Africa, from the earliest periods through the rise of various kingdoms and states, to the establishment of colonies and independent nations. Wole Soyinka through the historical allusion under consideration looks at women's participation in trade, including the slave trade, and agriculture; women's political roles in chiefship, other leadership positions, and nationalist movements; and the current constraints under which women function.

Then, 'Nazi salut' and 'Field Marshal' from Wole Soyinka's *Kongi's Harvest* are historical allusions to dictatorial regimes in Africa. To begin with 'Field Marshal', *Webster Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language* defines it as 'a military officer of the highest rank, as in the French and some other armies'¹⁷⁰. Additionally, it defines the concept 'nazi' as a member of the National Socialist German Workers' party of Germany, which in 1933, under Adolf Hitler, seized political control of the country, suppressing all opposition and establishing a dictatorship over all cultural, economic, and political activities of the people, and promulgate belief in the supremacy of Hitler as Führer, anti-Semitism, the natural

¹⁷⁰ *Webster Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language*, op. cit.

supremacy of the German people, and the establishment of Germany by superior force as a dominant world power.

In the above definitions of the historical allusions 'Field Marshal' and 'nazi', the sound idea is the use of military force alone as a principle of governance, and its consequences such as authoritarian regime or dictatorship, violation of fundamental rights (freedom of speech, freedom of association and of political formations, etc.), long for absolute power, modification of national constitution, running election and re-election without real opposition, mismanagement of public funds; poverty, starvation for the other people, execution of leaders in opposition, etc.: lack of democracy.

In his *Kongi's Harvest*, Wole Soyinka alludes directly to the historical 'Field Marshal' and the 'nazi' in order to satirize the new political leaders in Africa, and wherever in the world they are stronger than the institutions. All the relevant trappings mentioned, and that characterizes the 'nazi' function in Kongi's political administration. President Kongi is concerned about the state and not individual matters, he came to power by force, and self-proclaimed president of the land of Isma, his New Regime relies on his own propaganda, he reassesses the role of communication and media, he makes a negative use of modern communication system to maintain and sustain the ruling hegemony, he defeats and detains king Danlola and his traditional groups, he instrumentalizes intellectuals for his own interests rather than the people's benefits, he causes the reign of starvation even among workers, he promotes social rotteness, intellectual dishonesty, leader worship, he proclaims himself the Spirit of the Harvest, the Jesus of Isma, the Messiah, he carries out frequent incidents of bomb-throwing, opening fire on people, and hanging them.

Furthermore, the description the 'Field Marshal' and the 'Nazi', would likely act as an historical allusion to the significant and true events, supported by evidences in Kwame Nkrumah Ghana's post-independence political experience, especially the political crisis of Ghana: Nkrumah's downfall. President Kongi in Wole Soyinka's literary work is the embodiment of dictatorship, totalitarian regime. In Africa's past, this characterization integrates the negative actions that President Nkrumah took in Ghana. The government increased the powers of the President by passing legislations,

including the Deportation Act, passed in July 1957, to merge the opposition parties into one party, called the United Party; similarly, the Emergency Power Act, passed in January 1958, to give power to the government to deal with unrest and disturbances in the country; the Preventive Detention Act of 1958 which had the effect of crippling the opposition parties. That Act was applied indiscriminately to terrorise both the people and leaders who had no means of redress. For instance, J.B. Danquah and Obetsebi Lamprey died in detention. We think also of the referendum of 1964, following which the country was proclaimed a one-party state. Ghana under Nkrumah successfully followed the teachings of British constitutionalism and democracy based on the supremacy of the people represented by Parliament. The Ghanaians read and knew the same rule that is constitutionalism, and felt confident. As a consequence, they obtained their own independence. It seems quite evident that Nkrumah's work in the light of British democratic and constitutional practice remains a monument. But as human reason seems to be a weak and fallible guide, Nkrumah and the other political leaders had come to exercise public authority according to their own will; state and civic institutions, executive and legislative powers, had had their source not in the constitution but in their own will. That may also mean that Nkrumah's government had become a government of men, not of law. In short, Nkrumah had abandoned his initial parliamentary government. He had then betrayed the people. As a consequence, he was chased away just like the British had done many centuries before against their divine right absolute monarchs.

In his *Postcolonial Identity in Wole Soyinka*, especially the part devoted to 'The Banality of Postcolonial Power', Mpalive-Handson Msiska explains that, in a typical Soyinka style, the playwright's dictator embodies the character of African autocrats in general. Kongi has Nkrumah's penchant for writing political philosophies, and aspects of his youth political organisation. As critics have noted, Soyinka's attitude to the Nkrumah legacy is too complicated to be exhausted by the singularly power-hungry Kongi. Soyinka respected Nkrumah the pan-Africanist, but he abhorred Nkrumah the dictator.¹⁷¹

In addition, responding to Dennis Duerden's question on the issue, Soyinka makes his universalist intention clear:

¹⁷¹ Oyin Ogunba, *The Movement of Transition* (Ibadan: Ibadan University Press, 1975), pp. 199-200.

This should not be taken to mean that [the play] is referring specifically to some Yoruba dictator, of which there is none the way at the moment, although I know at least half a dozen would – be – dictators in Nigeria, but [...] it's meant to apply to the whole trend towards dictatorship, on all sorts of spurious excuses, in the newly independent states in Africa.¹⁷²

From this citation, Wole Soyinka reveals the local and universal relevance of the cultural and political circumstances he deals in his *Kongi's Harvest*. This is the way to make his Yoruba audience, other ethnic and cultural audiences to situate the play within their own immediate and wider context.

The ideal which *A Dance of the Forests*, Soyinka's independence play sets out to achieve passes through the disruption of the society's religious norms is purification. According to this outlook, this religious ceremony which consists in making pure, cleansing, would not be achieved by the palliation of guilt but by its exhumation. This is the relevance of the play-within-a play in Soyinka's *A Dance of the Forests*. The recurrence of man's inhumanity, futilities, and crimes are tragically exposed before an audience that becomes convicted of sin.

In relation to crimes, the action of the play about Demoke and Oremole is a good example. In fact, Demoke is a talented and different carver in the land. He is a carver in wood. He carved the totem needed for the celebration of the gathering of the tribes. He had to have cut off the araba tree, in order to carve it, but he was unable to do so himself. Oremole, a follower of Oro, and Demoke's apprentice, climbed to the top and mocked Demoke for his inability. Demoke, infuriated, pulled Oremole down and he fell to his death. Then, possessed by his god Ogun, patron god of carvers, Demoke cut the top off the tree and carved the totem. From these facts, we emphasize the following ideas: Demoke's sacrifices Oremole's life in the cause of his art and for the sake of his own pride; professional jealousy; Demoke bears the guilt for his apprentice's death; Demoke's willingness of the creation, and the destruction of both others and himself.

¹⁷² *African Writers Talking*, ed. Dennis Duerden & Cosmo Pieterse (New York: Africana, 1972), p. 178-80.

II-2-7-Biblical Allusions.

In addition, Demoke's murder of Oremole is a notable example of biblical allusion. This murder from *A Dance of the Forests* is an indirect reference to the story of Cain and Abel in *The Bible*. This biblical story is also about murder, caused by jealousy. In fact, the record of Cain killing his brother Abel startles us in the record of Genesis. Soon after God created man, Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden. Consequently, they were driven out of the Garden to separate them from the Tree of Life. After leaving the Garden, Adam and Eve had two children: Cain and Abel. Cain was a farmer and Abel was a shepherd. In the course of time, both brought their sacrifices to God for worship. *The Bible* writes,

And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had no respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? And why is countenance fallen? If thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him. And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him. And the Lord said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper? And he said, What hast thou done? The voice of the brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground. And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand; When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a bagabond shalt thou be in the earth. And Cain said unto the Lord, My punishment is greater than I can bear. Behold, thou hast driven me out his day from the face of the earth; and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me. And the Lord said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the LORD set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him. And Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden.¹⁷³

At this level of the analysis, we find it better to view the phenomenon of intertextuality, especially its figures: allusion and reference. Both, allusion and reference have likeness. They refer to another work. In sociology and psychology, the term reference is defined as the process by which or the extent to which an individual establishes a relation with elements in society as a standard for comparing status and values.¹⁷⁴ From the definition above, we are going to establish a relation between facts and situations, and make a comparison of status and values in the biblical story about

¹⁷³ *The Holy Bible*, Genesis 4: 4-16.

¹⁷⁴ *The Oxford English Dictionary*, Second Edition Volume XIII, Quemado – Roaver, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989).

Cain killing Abel, and the story of Demoke murders Oremole in Soyinka's *A Dance of the Forests*. This is the way for us finding out the function of this biblical allusion.

In fact, to begin with the characters, the Demoke of *A Dance of the Forests* is a reference for Cain in the Bible. Oremole from the play refers to Abel in the Bible. Forest Head in *A Dance of the Forests* represents LORD in *The Bible*. Demoke and Oremole have certainly lived together for long time because of their professional relationship; Oremole is Demoke apprentice. Demoke kills Oremole his apprentice in the forest because of professional jealousy and anger, even though Oremole mockes at Demoke for his inability to climb the top of araba tree to cut it and carve the totem needed for the celebration of the gathering of the tribes. Cain killed his brother Abel – his companion of his youth, his own flesh and blood. Abel did nothing. There must have been that Cain and Abel played together and enjoyed each other's company. Cain killed Abel in the field because he resented that God accepted Abel's worship made by faith did not accept his. Cain killed him because of anger and jealousy.

As far as the literary ideas conveyed in both stories are concerned, we summarize them on the danger of harboring hatred, and violence. Though, it is inevitable for brethren to get crossed with one another. The wise way to deal with such problems and situations is to go and tell the brother his fault between oneself and him alone. The danger of harboring hatred is that, sometimes the poison becomes so strong that it will divide brethren one from another. In addition, the meaning that Wole Soyinka creates through his Demoke – Oremole – murder story, and its intertextual reference for the biblical story of Cain and Abel is, as we have just mentioned it, violence. Through this story Margaret Laurence states,

Wole Soyinka is dealing with the violence which is the other side of the coin of every personality, even the gentlest. [...] Soyinka is always reminding us of the inconvenient terrors of the human spirits.¹⁷⁵

This aspect of the story also tells the universality of Wole Soyinka because the situation of the double-heart-people and its consequence that is violence are experienced not only in Nigeria but all over the world. This means also that violence exists everywhere.

¹⁷⁵ Margaret Laurence, *Long Drums and Canons* (London: Macmillan, 1968), p. 33.

Furthermore, Demoke and Cain commit the same crime that is murder. But after the crime the two character in their respective stories hold different attitudes. We qualify them as positive and negative. Demoke's attitude is viewed as positive because he then confesses for his wrongdoing. This fact also places him in a kind of dialectic process, and Nick Wilkinson considers this as a human choice of Demoke, atoning for the death of Oremole.¹⁷⁶ There is no doubt to this because by killing of Oremole, Demoke releases into his greatest creative effort. Before the murder, he could not climb, cut the tree, and carve the totem. After the killing, he carves it. In relation to this situation, Margaret Laurence writes,

The process of art is seen partly in terms of possession by the god and partly in terms of Demoke's necessity to face within himself the existence of the opposing forces of creation and destruction. [...] He needs to create, but he is also capable of the destruction both of others and himself.¹⁷⁷

From the quotation above one may understand that Demoke kills Oremole not for the sake of killing; he does act in order to get ability resulting in the carving of the totem. In addition, Demoke confesses for his crime, and this confession places him in the situation that he was not actually punished in the manner of Cain.

To make a link between Demoke's murder of Oremole and the situation of Nigeria at Independence, we point the idea that, this shows the difficulties to make moral and good choices needed to advance the cause of the newly independent country.

The, in the drama of Wole Soyinka in general, and in *The Strong Breed* in particular, the heroic individual is at variance with society for the benefit of mankind. Unfortunately for the iconoclasts, their missions are fated to failure, for humanity is consistently revealed to be yielding to what one now must describe as her true nature and to the yawning chaos. 'And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and man loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evils'¹⁷⁸.

This is the central conflict in *The Strong Breed*. Sunma tells Eman, 'You are wasting your life on people who really want you out of the way' (p.88). The whole community from the oldest to the smallest, she says, is nourished and

¹⁷⁶ *Critical Perspectives on Wole Soyinka*, Edited by James Gibbs, op. cit., p.71

¹⁷⁷ Margaret Laurence, *Long Drums and Canons*, op. cit. p. 33.

¹⁷⁸ *The Holy Bible, John 3: 19.*

unwholesomeness. They lack the knowledge to use wisely the gift of initiative which Eman seeks to bestow on them. Expiation of communal sin and therefore of collective guilt at Eman's home town is done willfully and intelligently by a strong breed. These carry the boat (symbol of communal guilt) year after year to the river, until, worn out by their onerous spiritual tasks, they pass away to join the ancestors. This contrasts with the scapegoat role of Eman's new community.

They prefer to transfer sins and guilt into the innocent person. They therefore resent and are not prepared for Eman's innovations.

Like Christ, Eman stresses the place of the will in cleansing rites when he offers to stand in for Ifada, the scapegoat-carrier. The name of Eman, suggests Christ, who is also called Emmanuel, God is with us. One of Christ's missions was the introduction of initiative into Jewish worship. Says Christ:

Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written. "This people honours me with their lips, but their heart is far from me ; in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the precepts of man. You leave the commandment of God, and fast the tradition of men."¹⁷⁹

Christ also says, "But the hour is coming, and now is when the true worshipers will worship in spirit and in truth, for such the Father seeks to worship him."¹⁸⁰ Like Christ's, the special strong breed, Eman, to whom have been given the ministry of reconciliation, does his work by illuminating truth and those aspects of the collective unconscious which help in the generation of superior values.

From the ideas mentioned above, it cannot be overemphasized that the name Eman suggests an allusion to Jesus Christ; Eman bears the sin of the community as a carrier. Socially, the name replicates religion that is Christianity.

Furthermore, the story of *The Strong Breed* tells us that Eman is a stranger in the village. He is the son who has been tempted by the strange place offered to him by the world outside the pre-colonial village. This means that Eman has fled from his native village to another. Eman's biological father is Old Man, one of the strong breed that is the family of performers of the role of carrier during the ritual in their own village.

¹⁷⁹ *The Holy Bible, Matthieu 15: 7-9.*

¹⁸⁰ *The Holy Bible, John 4: 23.*

This fact helps us understanding that Eman has left his native village as a means to escape from the traditional role of carrier in his own village.

In these ways, *The Strong Breed* offers us the cleanest, most simple of affiliative plot: it seems a confrontation between son-rebel and traditional father. The departure of the son is synonymous with the rupture of the filiative line. But, the rupture seems superficial because all that is needed is a faithful, self-sacrificial, return to the rituals of the genuine African world-view. Indeed, the very image of a line of “strong ones” who carry their redemptive role, through their congenital blood shows the ambition of the affiliative project in the play. Eman rediscovers his authenticity through a rediscovery of the tradition of his people which still shows strength. Indeed, the force of the patrilineal line, of the organic traditions overpowers the quality of being of the individual son, Eman.

In this subsection devoted to biblical allusions and reference to *The Bible*, the affiliative plot of *The Strong Breed* shows us some other aspects of the story that allude and refer to *The Bible*. In fact, the superficial rupture of the filiative line between Eman the son, and Old Man the father, presents Eman in the situation of rebellion to her father. This fact actually integrate the biblical story about the prodigal son. *The Bible* writes:

...A certain man had two sons: And the youngest of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living. And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. And when he spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into a field to feed swine. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him. And when he came into himself, he said, how many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and I am no more worthy to be called thy son. But the father said to his servants, bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry: for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.¹⁸¹

The historical background and observations of the biblical quotation above which is about the parable of the prodigal or lost son reveal the following important ideas and points of interest in relation to the story of Eman and her father in *The Strong Breed* : the voluntary departure of the younger son to a far country after he has

¹⁸¹ *The Holy Bible, Luke 15: 11-24.*

instigated the early division of the family estate, in a distant country he could live freely without being controlled and censured in his lifestyle by the father, this demand shows a rebellious and proud disregard for his father's authority, selfish and immature attitude; the son's experience of misfortune, come to his sense, remembering his father, and own decision to return; and the celebrated reception by the father; etc.

As for the meaning of this parable, it integrates the major theme of *The Bible* that is God's love for the all humanity, forgiveness for all sinners through the blood of Jesus Christ. To this effect, this parable emphasizes the restoration of a believer into fellowship with the Father. Again, this parable is told by Jesus Christ as an answer to the Pharisees disgusted standing when Jesus is having a meal with sinners and tax collectors. The Pharisees have murmured to see Jesus receives sinners and eat with them. Jesus has told them this parable to teach them that God's love and forgiveness are paramount for all the people he created, be them all sinners.

As clear as it may appear, Eman and his father's story from *The Strong Breed* is the biblical allusion of the prodigal son's story from *The Bible*. Both stories present a voluntary departure of a son from his father's land to a distant country, the rebirth of the son's consciousness, the coming to sense, the rediscovery, all leading to the return of the prodigal son, and the acceptance for ritual performance as a carrier in a strange village by Eman. However, the departure and return of the prodigal son teach the paramouncy of God's love and forgiveness; whereas, the departure of Eman and his performance of the role of carrier as a stranger in the village links him to his patrilineal line of carrier. This aspect of affiliation enacts an important critique of the notion of continuity and development that is latent in *The Strong Breed*. In the liberal father, there is the tyrannical son; in the colonial educated elders of independence, one generation of elite has been replaced by a more ruthless one.

In addition, following Frederic Jameson, David Wood argues that it is through the text's formal (or structural) organization that the dominant ideologies of a particular social formation speak¹⁸². In this respect, the notion of discourse is used to describe the various systems of significance a culture resorts to make sense of itself. These discourses are themselves implicit historical narratives; that is, they shape history out the chaos, create a past from a standpoint of the present. Through the study of Wole

¹⁸² Frederic Jameson, *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act* (London: Methuen, 1981), p. 76.

Soyinka's *The Strong Breed*, therefore, it has been possible to decipher the affiliative discourse through which the play engages the broader fiction of the society's sense of history. Edward Said uses the term 'affiliative' to show how a writer alienated from a sense of social community and continuity.

We use this term here in a different way to relate to Soyinka's play writing about cultural continuity and tradition. The affiliative discourse of Nigerian postcolonial society stresses the significance of patrilineal lines of descent, stretching from a named ancestor through his descendent in a male line, their wives and children (Adediji 60). This discourse is productive both politically and aesthetically, being used to stress the cultural legitimacy, the authentic identity of a contemporary practice. The patriarchal structure is found in Wole Soyinka's *The Strong Breed*.

In terms of political and social formations, the use of the affiliative discourse as a way of establishing continuity is crucial. Sons are still named after their ancestors, and have the obligation to respect their fathers. Politicians can still use their status as elders to brow-beat young radicals.

As clear as this appears, the term affiliative expresses the full complexity of the discourse; it attempts to create a fiction of filiative continuity out of the chaos of postcolonial culture. The relation of power between both, former colonial power and its colony already independent is continuing in the framework of the Commonwealth of Nations. In fact, Great Britain has been able to maintain close, continuing relations with her former colonies that have become independent both in theory and in practice. The Commonwealth of Nations provides an example of close cooperation between countries of equal status but widely different strength. It consists of Great Britain and those former members of the British Empire that have acquired full control over every aspect of their internal and external policies, but chose to retain a special relationship with Great Britain and other members of the commonwealth.¹⁸³

In the above story of Eman from *The Strong Breed* which alludes to the biblical story of the prodigal son, we consider that the concepts such as the patrilineal line, the affiliative discourse, and patriarchy are quiet sound. Additionally, when we emphasize the concept 'patriarchy', it gives ways to find another aspect of biblical allusion. In fact, there can be no doubt that a patriarchal family structure predominates in the

¹⁸³ *The Macmillan Encyclopaedia* (London: Macmillan, 1990), p. 300.

biblical narration with the named patriarchs such as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. In the case of Abraham, he was the first Hebrew who lived in the land of Ur, known today as Iraq. Abraham's father, Terah, led the family to the land of Canaan. On the way, he came first to Haran, a place far from the north Canaan, where they settled. Terah died there at the age of 205 years. *Abraham had a revelation that God told him to continue on to Canaan where he will be the first to settle in the Promised Land*¹⁸⁴ (my italics). So Abraham left Haran for Canaan. As far as Isaac is concerned, he received everything that Abraham left to him when he died at the age of 175. Unfortunately, Jacob gets Isaac's blessing instead of Esau. In fact, when Isaac was old and his eyes were falling, he called for his oldest son Esau to hunt for some wild animal to make him a savoury meat, and feed him before he died. After overhearing the conversation, Rebekah his wife told Jacob to bring some goats for her to prepare so that he, Jacob, could bring it to Isaac. Through Rebekah's treachery, Isaac gave Jacob his blessing instead of Esau in accordance with the principle of patrilineal line which is also patriarchy. In so betraying her husband Isaac, Rebekah acts in such a way as to make an end to the system of patriarchy as Eman leaves his native village to escape the patrilineal line which compels him to play the role of carrier in *The Strong Breed*.

Furthermore, the *Webster's New International Dictionary of the English Language* defines the word 'patriarchy' as a state or stage of social development characterized by the supremacy of the father in the clan or family in both domestic and religious functions, the legal dependence of wife, or wives, and children, and the reckoning of descent and inheritance in the male line.¹⁸⁵ This means that patriarchy is the nearly universal social system by which men dominate women and other men. Combined with the fallen, sinful and aggressive nature of males, patriarchy has produced many evils such as: enslavement of wives, the exposure of female infants, the human sacrifice of virgin girls, polygamy, torture and murder of many women and girls.

In addition, biblical revelation was given within the patriarchal context and ancient Israel and the first-century Roman Empire. This revelation limited the practices of patriarchy by commanding children to honor both father and mother, holding men accountable to God for the treatment of their wives, and God's directive that marriage should be between one man and one woman.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁴ <http://www.usbible.com/Bible/Patriarchs.html>. (March 2015)

¹⁸⁵ *Webster's New International Dictionary of the English Language*, 2nd Ed, op. cit.

God created woman as well man in the divine image, and gave both man and woman a divine mandate to exercise dominion over the creation, not over each other, as *The Bible* writes:

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created them.¹⁸⁷

The biblical excerpt above reveals that all humanity, not only the male, were created in God's image. The name of the first man created by God is Adam. This word basically means earthy. In the book of Genesis, it is used for the human race and also for the first male human being. To this effect, since it is joined to plural words, it cannot mean the first human being alone. The generic usage is doubly confirmed by the statement, "let them have dominion" and "male and female created them." Women are specifically included by God. In addition, God's image includes all the divine characteristics that separate humans from the animal world. Sovereignty and dominion are major aspects of the character and image of God that are given to all people. So, women are created with these godly characteristics just as much as men. And sexual differences were created and designed for reproduction, not governance. In addition to this, the Scriptures nowhere directs a husband to rule over his wife, nor a wife to obey her husband. The second commandment directs children to honor both father and mother, showing that the marriage partners share equal authority over their children. This may also mean that a wife and her husband have equal authority for each other. However, *The New Testament* instructs wives to "submit" to their husband, not to "obey" them.

The essential in the above analysis, is that patriarchy practiced a chain of command from the oldest male over the clan; Jesus forbade his disciples to rule over one another; He called them instead to exhibit humility and love. *The Bible* shows patriarchy as a result of the fall, not God's original design for marriage and family, not patriarchy, but humility.

¹⁸⁶ *The Holy Bible, Genesis 2: 24.*

¹⁸⁷ *The Holy Bible, Genesis 1 : 26-7.*

Wole Soyinka, through the story of Eman in *The Strong Breed*, especially the aspects we consider as biblical allusions of the stories of the prodigal son, and patriarchy in *The Bible*, taking also into account the notions of continuity, humility, submission, love, equality, mutuality, in the father-mother-children relationship, addresses first of all, Nigerian colonial, postcolonial periods, and projects the future. Soyinka's major concern in this respect, is the relationship between the colonizer, with the qualification of former when we mean the postcolonial period, and the colonized people. Wole Soyinka's ideal is to see the former colonial power and all its people, and the former colonized people define their new relationship on the basis of not domination, nor rule, but mutuality, equality, true cooperation. This ideal is shared by Nelson Mandela when he said:

I have fought against white domination, and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die¹⁸⁸.

Then, for the universal population, Wole Soyinka teaches democratic principles wherever people are still considered in terms of tribe, ethnic groups, age, qualifications, sex, class, etc; and in the countries where governments are not yet voluntary associations and injure the lives or properties of their inhabitants; also in the countries whose leaders come to power by force, want to die in power, modify national constitutions at the end their terms of office so that they may become re-eligible without real opposition.

Furthermore, Eman tells the villagers that people should not be compelled to bear the sins of others. Rather, the carrier must be willing. This teaching is associated with the context of the villagers apparent choice of Ifada to perform the role of a carrier. Ifada is the idiot of the village. An analogy of farthing, Ifada contextually denotes a pauper, a person with no means of livelihood, especially one who is supported by charity. Wole Soyinka actually puns upon the name because of its ambiguous nature

¹⁸⁸ <http://www.goodreads.com/quotes/22390-during-my-lifetime-i-have-dedicated-myself-to-this-struggle>. (March 2015).

in the original source language that is Yoruba. Thus we have: Ifada – a contraction of ifa dara (free gift is good), and Ifada – also denotes ifa da (the Ifa oracle divines).

In addition, in Ifada is the biblical proof that ‘the poor is hated even of his own neighbour’¹⁸⁹. Therefore, he is hated by Sunma and the villagers who want to get rid of him by choosing him as a carrier. The name ‘Ifada’ implies an unintelligent poor man who does not understand the essence and meaning of the annual ritual which he is called to perform as a carrier.

Furthermore, the actions of *The Strong Breed* that involve Oroge have biblical overtones. The name ‘Oroge’ is Yoruba. Oroge (soft words) is a descriptive name which presupposes the existence of a man with gentle nature. Also the name suggests soft words. Oroge is unlike Jaguna, though they both work together in the play. As a man of peace who does not believe in force, he calms down Jaguna and patiently explains to Eman why Ifada must be released to them for ritual as follows:

Jaguna: We only waste time.

Oroge: Jaguna, be patient. After all, the man has been with us for time now and deserves to know. The evil of the old year is no light thing to load on any man’s head.

Eman: I know something about that.

Oroge: You do? [turns to Jaguna who snorts impatiently]. You see, I told you so didn’t I? From the moment you came I saw you were one of the knowing ones.¹⁹⁰

As Eman is unwilling to give up Ifada, and accuses Oroge and Jaguna of persons ‘who are behaving like men’, Oroge would not react negatively to the insinuation as Jaguna. This is explained below:

Eman: It is you who are not behaving like men.

Jaguna [advances aggressively]: That is quick mouth you have...

Oroge: Patience Jaguna...if you want the new year to be soft there must be no deeds of anger. What did you mean my friend?¹⁹¹

Now, Oroge is listening to Eman. Jaguna threatens to end the conversation abruptly. Oroge still replies softly with a smile and explains to Eman that Ifada would be willing. Also, while pursuing Eman as a carrier, Oroge maintains his calm posture. This prompts the following conversation:

¹⁸⁹ *The Holy Bible, Proverbs, 14: 20.*

¹⁹⁰ Wole Soyinka, ‘The Strong Breed’ in *Collected Plays I*, op. cit. pp. 128-9.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 129.

Jaguna: You were standing there looking at him as if he was some strange spirit. Why didn't you shout?
 Oroge: You shouted didn't you? Did that catch him?
 Jaguna: Do we have to talk with full mouth?
 Oroge: S-sh...look! ¹⁹²

The essential idea in the excerpts above is Oroge's gentility expressed by his soft words. To this respect, Oroge's word is a biblical allusion that "let your speech be always with grace seasoned with salt..." ¹⁹³.

The name 'Oroge' stems from biblical allusion. However, Soyinka's tragedies help to dramatize the sordid reality of the human condition. This is with the hope that the ugliness of the revelation would shock the audience. As we watch the innocent Eman crumbling under the onerous task of expiating evil, we feel 'subdued and guilty' ¹⁹⁴ like the villagers, like the Jewish after Christ's crucifixion. In addition, Soyinka seems to see tragedy as a means of initiating social re-awakening.

Kongi's Harvest includes songs in Yoruba; he uses Yoruba ritual and variations on Yoruba verse forms and contains many highly identifiable references to contemporary events. It presents the most universal and dramatic of contrasts – joy and pain, fulfilment and sterility, life and death – by reaching out to the Christian tradition, especially the gospel according to Saint Matthew. Through a sustained and coherent series of allusions, Soyinka indicates that the events in Isma are a local manifestation of an eternal struggle.

Kongi is a military dictator who aspires toward godhood. His disciples predict "his inevitable apotheosis" ¹⁹⁵. Instead of "for God's sake," the Third Aweri substitutes "for Kongi's sake" (71). The Fifth Aweri argues that Kongi should "demonstrate his power over life and death" by granting the condemned men a last-minute reprieve (86). Instead of the year of Christ's birth, the Organizing Secretary suggests that everything be dated from the year of Kongi's Harvest (92). When the photographer arrives, Kongi goes through a series of "Last Super" poses, including "the Temptation", "the Agony on the Mountains", and "the Giver of Life" (93). The Carpenters' Brigade sings "And Kongi is Our Saviour/Redeemer, prince of power"

¹⁹² Ibid., p. 135.

¹⁹³ *Holy Bible*, Colossians 4. 6.

¹⁹⁴ Wole Soyinka, "The Strong Breed" in *Collected Plays 1*, op. cit. P. 119.

¹⁹⁵ Wole Soyinka, "Kongi's Harvest" in *Collected Plays 2*, op. cit. P. 70.

(116). Negatively, Daodu refers to him twice as the ‘‘Messiah of Pain’’ (99). At the conclusion of his climatic speech, after handing over the new yam to Danlola, Daodu says,

So let him, the Jesus of Isma, let him, who has assumed the mantle of a Messiah, accept from my farming settlement this gift of soil and remember that a human life once buried cannot, like this yam, sprout anew. Let him take from the palm only its wine and not crucify lives upon it. ¹⁹⁶

At this moment, gun-fire burst out, killing Segi’s father. Kongi concludes,

There is divine blessing on the second Five-Year Development Plan. The spirit of resurgence is cleansed in the blood of the nation’s enemies, my enemies, the enemies of our collective spirit, the Spirit of Planting, the Spirit of Harvest, the Spirit of Inevitable History and Victory, all of which I am. ¹⁹⁷

The challenger of and antithesis to Kongi is that ‘‘democratic prince’’, and ‘‘a prince of slogans,’’ a mingler at Segi’s with ‘‘prostitutes and cut-throats,’’ Daodu. He is not only the political heir apparent to Danlola’s throne but also a messiah of joy and feasting. He first seems to become aware of his role at the end of the First Part when, like Christ seeing the spirit of God descending like a dove upon him, he sees ‘‘a sign from heaven’’ and says, ‘‘it may turn me superstitious yet’’ (97). Segi encourages Daodu in his new role. She drapes a new robe around him. This is indicated in a significant stage direction, ‘‘kneels and clings to the hem of his robes’’ (98). In addition, she pleads with him to ‘‘preach life Daodu, only life...It needs a sermon on life...love.’’ Daodu ‘‘resignidly’’ accepts his new role, although he hopes to be more than ‘‘an antithesis to your Messiah of Pain’’ (99).

He hopes, in fact, to become a messiah of joy and feasting. Having fully assumed his new role, he contrasts his second coming with the first:

This trip, I have elected to sample the joys of life, not its sorrows, to feast on the pounded yam, nor on the rind of yam, to drink the wine myself, not leave it to my ministers for frugal sacraments, to love the women, not merely wash their feet at the well...we may hereby repudiate all Prophets of Agony, unless it be recognized that pain may be endured only in the pursuit of ending pain and fighting terror. ¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 128.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., pp. 120-30.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., op. cit. p. 127.

Likewise, during the “first feast, a genuine Harvest orgy of food and drink that permits no spectators, only celebrants,” singing bursts out:

At my first coming/ Scourges all the way/ At my first coming Whips to my skin/ Cudgels on the madman's back.Now this second coming/ Is time for harvest/ This second coming is for pounding of yams/ The mortar spills over Goodness abundant/ My body is balm / I have come wife-seeking / I am borne on laughter / I have come palm wine thirsting / My rheum is from sweet peppers / Contentment is earth's / Ease for her portion / Peace is triumphant.¹⁹⁹

The conclusion seems unmistakable that Soyinka, whose upbringing and education were Christian but who is no longer a practicing Christian, believes that the message of a messiah of pain is inappropriate or enslaving to the people of Africa.

It is fitting that the struggle between Kongi and Daodu climaxes at the New Yam festival because the two differ so dramatically in their wish to feed and nurture. Kongi starves his disciples or, at best, gives them “a few crumbs of mouldy bread” (88). Daodu, in contrast, starts a farmers’ community that produces the prize-winning New Yam. At the very moment Kongi receives the monster New Yam, a symbol of life and fertility, his men kill Segi’s father.

Nevertheless, the “Harvest orgy of food and drink” continues; at its centre is “the heart and stomach of a good feast” (130). All celebrate except Kongi, who fruitlessly “harangues his audience in words drowned in the bacchanal” (131). Then, in a brilliant coup de theatre, the culmination of the religious and food imagery, Segi throws open the lid of the copper salver: “In it, the head of an old man” (132). Kongi’s harvest is sterility and death.

The allusion to Herod’s order to give him “on a dish the head of John the Baptist” points to the great model on which Soyinka conceived this climax. In his gospel, Matthew juxtaposes the killing and serving up of John the Baptist with Christ’s feeding of the multitude²⁰⁰. A horribly sterile meal that can nourish only the darkest appetites is contrasted with the nourishing of many common people with good words and a miraculously fruitful meal. Words, however, appear in linear sequence and cannot convey simultaneity as dramatically as visual media, like film and theatre. Soyinka knows the gospels well. In fact, he ironically recalls the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand in the last section of the poem “Ikeja, Friday, Four O’clock”.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid., op. cit. pp. 140-1.

²⁰⁰ *The Holy Bible*, Matthew 14: 3-12.

In any event, Kongi's Harvest presents the theatrical equivalence of the biblical story.

The final section, "Hangover," is a deliberate anti-climax. The apocalyptic moment has been lost; political reality reasserts itself. Survival, not salvation, is the theme. As the cynical Secretary says, "Doesn't anyone know it's never any use" (128). Neither Kongi nor Daodu appears. Neither is the true messiah. One has the will, the other the power, to save; each by himself is inadequate. Perhaps Soyinka is suggesting that there is no external in the political sphere. Of course, Segi had said to Daodu, "It will be enough that you erect a pulpit against him, even for one moment" (99), but Daodu himself had rejected such a limited role.

II-2-8-Reference to *The Bible*.

In the phenomenon of intertextuality, reference is one of the figures. This intertextual figure, reference, is defined as a dialogic or dialectic relationship between one work and a preceding one (stolen from a previous literature lecture). This intertextual dialogue is close to another intertextual figure, that is to say, the citation. Reference as an intertextual figure establishes a relation in absentia, but it does not write the exact words of the text. This means that, it does not indicate clearly the texts it refers to. A literary work references another work of literature, work of art, historical figure, place, or event. In general, this passing reference is not explained by the writer, so only the reader who is familiar with the referenced work tends to notice it. In some cases, a literary work is used simply because it already communicates what the writer wants to say, and what he could have himself. In some cases, a reference to another work is given in a context that is drastically opposed to the original meaning. This technique is often used to refute the meaning of the original and to assert a new meaning.

In addition, reference does not limit its use in the traditional field of literature. It opens its doors to non-literary domains. That is why in some of Wole Soyinka's plays under study, words, sentences, or parts of texts refer to *The Bible*, to religion, to a community's culture, etc. The different types of references are the concerns of this subsection. We first of all provide a series of definitions of the notion reference, and

then, we will deal with those different types and their meaning in Wole Soyinka's plays.

To begin with a series of definitions of the word "reference" as an intertextual figure, the *Online Etymology Dictionary* defines the term "reference" as the act of referring, from refer+-ance, or else from French reference, from Mediaval Latin referential, from Latin referentem (nominative referens), present participle of referre. The meaning is "direction to a book or passage"; it is recorded from 1610s²⁰¹. One refers to a topic or fact. The meaning of a "reference" varies accordingly with its use by the reader.

In Logic and Linguistics, a reference is the act or state of referring through which one term or concept is related or connected to another or to objects in the world²⁰².

In these domains of study, a reference is considered as an activity which creates a relationship between the sign and the parole. In literature, the reference is an explicit form of intertextuality.²⁰³

The difference between a reference and a citation is that, the citation is the act of citing verbatim the spoken, written, or printed words of another, whereas the reference is an explicit and non-literal practice.

Annick Bouillaguet cited by Gilles Lugin defines reference as an explicit non-literal borrowing.²⁰⁴ The reference does not expose the text, but refers a reader to a character or specific situation of another passage or book. A reference is indirectly mentioned in the text. To this effect, it cannot be identified in the same way as a citation. It integrates the new discourse without being identifiable by its typographic signs.

In addition, the idea of two texts is clear in the use of "reference": first text and second text. In relation to this fact, a "reference" involves a comparison. The reader of the text refers to the idea, to the actual text that he establishes a relation with the

²⁰¹ <http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=reference>. (March 2015).

²⁰² Jan Pedersen, *Subtitling Norms for Television: An exploration focussing on extralinguistic cultural references* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins B.V., 2011), P. 50.

²⁰³ Nathalie Piegay-Gros, *Introduction à l'intertextualité* (Paris, Dupond, 1996), p.48.

²⁰⁴ Gilles Lugin, *Généricité et intertextualité dans le discours publicitaire de presse écrite* (New York, Peter Lang SA, 2006), P. 205.

text he is reading. Reference also implicates movement of texts. It assimilates, incorporates other texts into the discourse.

Reference is multiple-type intertextual subfigures. *Collins Cobuild English Dictionary* defines reference as a word, phrase, or idea which comes from something such as a book, poem, or play and which one uses when making a point about something²⁰⁵. The example given in relation to this definition is historical references. Additionally, references as allusions can be literary, social, mythological, biblical and religious, artistic, etc.

After a series of definitions of the intertextual reference, we analyze the different types of reference used in Wole Soyinka's plays under investigation.

The general methodology of the whole dissertation is chosen in the way that, to avoid repetitions of ideas which could be detrimental to the unity of the whole dissertation, we limit the analysis of reference to *The Bible*.

In this subsection, we are concerned with words, phrases, expressions, sentences, rites, all that is part of *The Bible* and religion as well. They are used by characters to express their feelings, thoughts, needs, and behaviors in the plays. In *The Swamp Dwellers*, the action can be interpreted in such a way that, 'the plight of Igwezu, who seems to be on a quest to secure his identity, could be one of the few features of the absurdist character.'²⁰⁶

However, Igwezu is not searching from within himself. He is looking at external figures like the city or his parents when he asks, as if in echo of the Biblical Cain. "Father. Tell me, father, is my brother a better man than I?" (Soyinka 1986: 107). The essential ideas are, in *The Bible* Cain kills his brother Abel, and in *The Swamp Dwellers*, Igwezu's wife is seduced by his twin brother in the city.

In addition, Lakunle's 'A prophet has honour except in his own home' (p.6) is a sentence explicitly mentioned in *The Lion and the Jewel* to refer directly to *The Bible*. Jesus says this when his family and all the persons known to him in his home town of Nazareth reject his teachings because the people stress that He is, but one of them, and could not believe in his teachings and manifestations of power. The biblical

²⁰⁵ *Collins Cobuild English Dictionary English Dictionary* (London: Harper Collins Publisher Ltd., 1995).

²⁰⁶ <http://www.levi.om/coruro/beckett.html>. 6 March 2000, "BohemianInk: Samuel Beckett". (March 2015).

saying is ‘‘A prophet is not without honour, except in his own country’’.²⁰⁷ This may be a general saying rather than a specific claim to be a prophet, although, others unquestionably saw Him as one, and it does indicate that Jesus would not shy the title. But the gist of the saying is clearly that familiarity breeds contempt.

In Wole Soyinka’s *The Lion and the Jewel*, Lakunle one of the three main characters, uses the reference under consideration in the same situation as Jesus in *The Bible*: familiarity breeds contempt. In fact, the action of the play in which this reference is used involves Lakunle and Sidi. Lakunle tells Sidi his thoughts and plans for the future of the village. He promises that in a year or two, Sidi will have machines to do his pounding, and grind his pepper without it getting in his eyes. It is the village they are living in that he shall turn inside out. Beginning with that crafty rogue, Sidi’s past master of self-indulgence – Baroka. Sidi reacts after Lakunle’s talk. She asks him: Are you still on about the Bale? What has he done to you?²⁰⁸

These two questions express Sidi’s agreement on his love with Baroka rather than with Lakunle. They may also be synonymous with rejection. In addition, as for Lakunle’s plans for the future of the village, Sidi keeps on asking him if he buys those machines or merely he goes mad and dreams of them. As a consequence, Lakunle alludes to another place, Lagos, that city of magic, in Badagry where Saro women bathe in gold. Sidi tells him to go there, these places where woman would understand him if he told them of his plans with which he oppresses her daily.

The reference to religion above, its context defines in short the personality of Lakunle. He represents a very negative form of hybridity. This fact reduces his chances to win Sidi’s love. The latter ends unbelieving, rejecting him, and telling him to go elsewhere. However, Sidi does not actually lack total affection for Lakunle.

In a special note, we find it also interesting to comment a bit more on the fact that Lakunle in one of his talks to Sidi evokes the name Baroka and says his negative thoughts against him for the first time since the play opens. But he refers to him, Baroka, as if he has addressed, talked about him before in the play. Baroka has not entered in the scene yet. We may think of a flashback, which in fact is not one; it is may be a false flashback. In clear, we discover that the characters recall actions they have done, ideas they have expressed before the opening of the play. The meaning of

²⁰⁷ *The Bible*, Mark 6:4.

²⁰⁸ Wole Soyinka, ‘‘The Lion and the Jewel’’ in *Collected Plays 2*, op. cit., p. 6.

this is that, the characters have such an attachment to their past; they make use of their memory in the present time and for the future.

We attribute this technique to Wole Soyinka the writer of the play, and consider this as part of his aesthetic features. After, in the same play, Lakunle says: ‘‘And the man shall take the woman and the two shall be together as one flesh’’. ²⁰⁹

These two clauses are the continuation of the declaration which, in full is written as follows: ‘‘Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh’’. ²¹⁰

When we look at these two texts, we realize that in the reference, Lakunle does not begin the statement by the main part. He only uses the two clauses to make a point about marriage.

In *The Bible*, and in Genesis in particular, ‘‘And the man shall take the woman and the two shall be together as one flesh’’, these are thoughts by some to be the words of Moses, inferring from the above fact, what ought to be among men. And by others, the words of Adam under divine inspiration, as the father of mankind instructing his sons what to do, and foretelling what would be done in all succeeding ages; though they rather seem to be the words of God himself, by whom marriage was now instituted.

Lakunle uses these two sentences that are references to *The Bible* to tell Sidi that he wants to marry her in the way God instituted marriage. He shall quiet all his relations to remain faithful to her, they shall become one flesh. To this respect, Lakunle is making a decision that he shall cleave unto Sidi with cordial affection, taking care of her, nourishing and cherishing her, providing all things comfortable for her, continuing to leave with her, and not depart from her as long as they live. The phrase ‘‘and shall cleave unto his wife’’ is expressive of the near union by marriage between man and wife; they are, as it were, glued together, and make but one; which is more fully and strongly expressed in the next clause: ‘‘and they shall be one flesh’’; that is, the man and his wife are one person, one soul, one body; and which is to be observed against polygamy, unlawful divorces, and all uncleanness, fornication, and adultery.

In addition, this reference to *The Bible* shows Lakunle’s adherence to, and acceptance of the Christian approach about marriage. There is no doubt that this fact

²⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 9.

²¹⁰ *The Holy Bible*, Genesis 2: 24.

integrates, and is an aspect of the issue of modernity in *The Lion and the Jewel*. But we have to take into account Sidi's reaction to Lakunle's Christian and Western approach to marriage. She only asks him to "pay the bride price"²¹¹. It appears now clear that Sidi shares Lakunle's view about marriage; but she adds a traditional dimension with the bride price as a condition to her accepting him as the equal partner in his race of life. Unfortunately, Lakunle refuses that traditional exigency for marriage: pay the bride price. In the same way Wole Soyinka who puts these words in the mouths of Lakunle and Sidi conveys the idea that, to some extent, situations and circumstances, traditional principles must be respected in order to see its victory over modernity.

The forthcoming reference to *The Bible* is,

"Yesterday's wine alone is strong and blooded, child and though the Christians' holy book denies the truth of this, old wine thrives best within a new bottle. The coarseness is mellowed down, and rugged wine acquires a full and rounded body...Is this not so – child?"²¹².

In the excerpt above from *The Lion and the Jewel*, the statement we consider as reference to *The Bible* is "old wine thrives best within a new bottle". This declaration refers to *The Bible*. It writes,

"And no man putteth new wine into old bottles: else the new wine doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will be marred: but new wine must be put into new bottles."²¹³

The reading of both texts: reference and the Biblical passage it refers to, reveals differences at the level of semantics. We realize that Baroka's statement modifies and changes the meaning when we compare it to the text from *The Bible*. He uses the same words, particularly the same adjectives: 'old' and 'new' as in *The Bible*; but he changes their use and position. He says: "old wine thrives best within a new bottle", and *The Bible* writes: "no man putteth new wine into old bottles [...] new wine must be put into

²¹¹ Ibid., p. 9.

²¹² Ibid., p. 49.

²¹³ *The Bible*, Mark 2: 22.

new bottles’’ because ‘’new wine doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will be marred.’’²¹⁴

The sense of the biblical text is this: new wine, in process of fermentation, will burst old bottles made of wine-skins not strong enough to resist the strength of the fermenting fluid; so that there is a twofold loss – both that of the bottles and that of the wine. And therefore new wine must be poured into bottles made of fresh wine-skins, which, by reason of their strength and toughness, shall be able to resist the fermenting energy of the wine.

In addition, Baroka uses this modified reference to *The Bible* for the purpose of winning Sidi, the young beautiful virgin girl of the village who is the jewel in the title of the play. The image of ‘’new bottle’’ used by Baroka represents Sidi, and ‘’old wine’’ for Baroka himself. Baroka is an old man aged seventy; he knows more about how to captivate women. That is the essence of his address to Sidi when he tells her that the proof of wisdom is the wish to learn even from children. He adds that, the old must flow into the new, and a girl like Sidi must inherit miracles which age alone reveals. Sidi in turn finds that, everything Baroka says seems wise to her, which means his consent, agreement and acceptance of Baroka.

From the dramatic situation above one may understand that, both Baroka and Sidi act for the victory of tradition over modernity.

In sum, one may clearly understand that, in Wole Soyinka’s plays under investigation, language is the building block of his writings. In the plays, language is inventive and overcomes the readers expectations of what words can do in close relation with the main and sub themes of the works. The varieties of language we have found out, described, and analysed are: American Colloquial English, simplified English and Nigerian Pidgin English. The sophistication of Wole Soyinka language in his plays is based on the fact that he has a very good command of the English language. This proves the use of the Standard English in his literary works under consideration. At this level, there is also a unity between all the varieties of language used in the plays, and the themes they deal with. In addition to language varieties, the high level of intertextuality in the plays does the same. Intertextual varieties in the plays are: citations, allusions, and reference, with their respective sub categories. In this respect,

²¹⁴ *The Holy Bible*, Mark 2: 22.

we find that they are all integrate part of Wole Soyinka's aesthetic features, and we read them in the perspective of fulfilling the function of utility.

CHAPTER III

THEATRICALITY: SHIFTING DRAMATIC FORMS

Drama and theatre are placed within the field of literature. The phrase that constitutes the title of this part is meaningful. We emphasize the two words: drama and theatre so that we may gain a better understanding of this issue. To begin with drama, generally speaking, it is one of three literary genres. Drama as a literary genre is realized in performance, which is to 'do a piece of work' or 'act a play before an audience.'²¹⁵ In this respect, we describe it as a staged art. This aspect turns drama into a literary form²¹⁶ which is designed for the theatre because characters are assigned either roles and they act out their roles as the actions are enacted on stage²¹⁷.

As we can understand, any dramatic action is designed either in writing or in performance. Drama is also the play for theatre, a composition, presentation and performance of plays for the theatre.²¹⁸ In addition, we find the possibility of an assimilation of both drama as a literary genre and drama as a literary form because a written dramatic action bears some marks that can be staged, and make it a performed dramatic action. In the the same way, what is performed can easily be written. Then, when a dramatic action is acted on stage, we may associate it with performance, and when it is read it becomes a composition.

Seemingly both staged art and performed art employ the same elements of literature: plot, setting, characterization, narration, theme, etc. and dramatic extra devices such as mime, dance, music, etc.

These are also presented in acts and scenes, movement or part. And there are some dramatic actions which are presented as a whole. Dramatists enjoy such a freedom as they adopt their own style. Furthermore, the dramatic action which is to be read and be performed informs, educates and entertains the people.

This chapter is devoted to the analysis, first of all, the dramatic and theatrical style. In this context, the word style is synonymous with the word art²¹⁹. Additionally, dramatic and theatrical style or art analysis consists in studying the ways in which Wole Soyinka as a dramaturge has conceived the organization and composition of the

²¹⁵ A. S. Hornby, *The Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* (London: Oxford Press, 1974).

²¹⁶ *Element of Drama*, <http://www.nou.edu.ng/> noun (March 2015).

²¹⁷ *Element of Drama*, op. cit.

²¹⁸ A. S. Hornby, op. cit.

²¹⁹ *Element of Drama*, op. cit.

plays that constitute the corpus of this dissertation in the perspective entirely oriented to the presentation, that we may call dramaturgy and theatricality.

It is in this respect that we divide this chapter into four parts the first of which deals with play structures, balance and theatrical devices. Here, we try to investigate the main styles adopted by Wole Soyinka in his selected plays, and secondly, this chapter also examines the plays in the perspective of symmetry.

Last but not least, we study and analyse the dramatic extract devices used by the author in the plays under scrutiny.

III-1- PLOTS AND THEATRICAL STRUCTURES.

The plot is one of the main elements of fiction. It is the plan or outline of the events of a story, especially of a novel or a play. This may also mean that, the plot is the causal arrangements of events in a play or a novel. The plays' organizations influence or are influenced by the plots²²⁰. Structural analysis usually involves one or more of the following considerations: why chronological order is adhered or violated and how the central problem is presented or solved, and how the author uses structure to evoke an emotional response.

In this respect the plot is divided into five main stages. And the normal stages may be developed as follows: first the problem is raised and the most important characters appear. Then, the problem raised is fully developed; some characters have played their roles. Next, the whole situation drops to another stage for further complications. The action reaches its climax. At last, there is a denouement, which is also called a catastrophe or a resolution²²¹.

To better achieve our purpose, we refer to Norman Friedman²²² who described a comprehensive list of plots. It is based on a classification by R.S Crane and adding

²²⁰ http://changingminds.org/disciplines/storytelling/plots/friedman_plots/friedman_plots.htm(March 2015)

²²¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dramatic_Structures/Frerytag.27s_analysis.

²²² http://changingminds.org/disciplines/storytelling/plots/friedman_plots/friedman_plots.htm(March 2015), op. cit.

considerations of success, responsibility, attractiveness and the impact on the receiver. Friedman notes that the main purpose of the story is to stimulate emotions and education through a sequence of cause, effects and end.

In addition, this study, can be achieved through the analysis of the different plots as classified by Ducrot and Todorov²²³. In fact, both authors have made a deep study on the organization of plots. They have found three main categories that constitute the main orientation of this section: the plots of destiny also called the plots of fortune, the plots of character and the plots of thought. Stories of the same category, but from different plays will be analysed within one sub-section. Again, as far as possible, plot from other works but of the same kind to the one dealt with in the section will be described in the course of this analysis. The reasons for this methodological aspect are: first of all, to lend originality to my thesis; secondly, all the times and all over the world the peoples face the same problems; thirdly from this, we hope to be more convincing on the categories of plots in the plays under scrutiny.

III-1-1-Reading Through Theatrical Plot.

In the plots of destiny, there is a person who is the principal character of the story whose circumstances are changed in the story. They include: the plot of action, the pathetic plot, the tragic plot; the punishment plot, and the sentimental plot.

The pathetic plot refers to a weak character that loses out. The instance we cite as illustration of this is the turn of events about the search for salvation in *The Swamp Dwellers*.

The truth is that the protagonist of the play, Igwezu, an ideal son of the swamp, and loyal to tradition, has performed all the rites required by the deity to ensure a good harvest and a happy life with his wife. The importance of god gradually creeps into his awareness from several inexplicable mishaps that confront him, both in the city and the swamp. In his short stay in the city to try his hand at making money, his twin brother, Awuchike seduces his wife, contrary to the values of the swamp. Much

²²³ Basile Marius Ngassaki, "Contribution to Denise Paulme's Theory on the Morphology of the African Tale and its Application on Tutuola's *The Village Witch Doctor and Other Stories* in *Annales de l'Université Marien Ngouabi*, op. cit. p.23.

frustrating, he fails in his commercial enterprise. His misery is recalled later on his return to the swamp when he tells the Kadiye: "I' am afraid, have had my turns already. I lost everything, my savings, even my standing as a man. I went into depth."²²⁴

In addition, Igwezu's tragedy is severer when he returns to the swamps with the hope of recovering from his despair by harvesting his crops: "I came back with the assurance of one who has lived his land and tilled it faithfully".²²⁵ He discovers with utter disappointment and disbelief that the floods had ruined his farm and "the beans and the corn had made everlasting pottage with mud".

To this effect, the idea of "loss" reflects Igwezu's inability to comprehend the complication of his existence, and therefore, questions and condemns the potency of the serpent of the swamps to whom he has offered enormous sacrifices.

The tragic plot concerns a weak hero who is somehow responsible for his own misfortunes. The reader passes through catharsis. The example which can make it clear through Soyinka's *The Strong Breed* is the story about Eman's vocation as a "carrier" which he so signally tries to unbecome and therefore ends up becoming. This may also mean that Eman becomes the carrier that he was in any case born to be.

In fact, as outlined, the play refers to a folk tradition by which one person becomes the "carrier" of community evil and symbolically, purifies the village in an annual ritual. The hero is Eman who has come to this particular village. He has fled the family tradition of symbolic sacrifice. Eman interferes in the ritual affairs of a village in which he is a stranger. He makes his own victimization inevitable by harbouring the fugitive idiot, Ifada, whom the priest Jaguna and its attendants have chosen as a carrier because he is the only other stranger in the village.

The irony here is that, first, we notice that being a "stranger" only reinforces Eman's status as a "carrier" of misfortune in his new village, a status which he thought he had rejected. Secondly, Eman the champion of universal human dignity dies in a manner that seems to role him of his humanity, killed by an animal trap set for him by his pursuers.

²²⁴ Wole Soyinka, "The Swamp Dwellers" in *Collected Plays I*, op. cit., p. 107.

²²⁵ Ibid., p. 104.

In addition, the tragic plot shows that people may be, to some extent responsible for their own destiny as can be illustrated by the issues of bribe, forgery, institutionalized corruption, etc. associated with professor in *The Road*.

At the beginning of the first play- within -a -play, professor is away and does not appear. He is only mentioned by Salubi. The action comprises a single day, from 5 a.m. to 5 p. m. The scene is a road – side shack presumably in Nigeria with a church close by, parts of which are also on stage, there is a dilapidated “manning wagon” downstage and the side opposite the church. Part of the shack is a used parts store, and Samson sits on professor’s chair, placed on the top of a would – be chauffeur and pretends to be an “African Millionaire” flinging bribes to a line of police.

Salubi and Samson are playing the dozen on their social condition of being jobless tout and private drivers temporary unemployed. This happens when Kotunu is still sleeping. Salubi drives only private car owners, but he does not get a driving licence that he needs now. He says that, it is a matter of getting professor to forge one for him. Meanwhile Salubi has asked professor a hundred times, but he always says go away; come back when you have a job.

As time passes, professor gets to the door, and Salubi dives under the table. Samson who is too late turns round and stares petrified. Professor carries four enormous bumbles of newspaper. He enters in a high state of excitement. He has reached the place where his table normally is. Professor asks Salubi to come out from under the table. Salubi does not care about professor. He can’t do him anything because the man is a menace, pulling up road – signs. As the story progresses, Samson and Salubi go to see professor if he would favour them with his opinion on a very delicate matter that they are both out of a job. Professor says that it is a consultation. That is why Samson fishes out a three pence and places it on the table. He adds a penny, then another. He is about to add another but he decides to protest. Professor looks at him, then at the money. He puts the coins in his pocket and he says all right, but only for him.

Then, Salubi comes and says to professor that he needs a licence. Professor in turn considers this past his hour of consultation. Salubi places a shilling on the desk, and professor picks up the shilling. He adds that Salubi needs some sort of official document. He asks him the photos. He rapidly produces two photos. Then, professor tells him to come back tomorrow morning. He also puts on a pair of glasses and

examines the licence carefully. He places Salubi's photograph over Kotunu's because he is getting old since he has just celebrated his hundredth birthday. Once he could do three licences in a week, now if he manages one, he feels the life has gone from him. Professor is conscious of this as a sign of his falling powers.

Samson comes to that Kotunu's licence is more genuine than the one he forges. To this, professor asks Samson to take his life away. He also adds that Samson is not special different from the rest of them.

As a consequence, Salubi dips his hand into his pocket and brings out his clenched fist. He slides an object along the bench. Tokyo grasps the knife, and plunges it in professor's back.

The punishment plot refers to a hero who is not sympathetic because of wrongdoings. But he fails to achieve what he planned to do. The issue of the expelling of the Professor from the church in *The Road* by Wole Soyinka is the example that illustrates this plot. It is true that Professor is a contradictory character, and the word is slippery and is not always an embodiment of the truck. In fact when Murano is killed, just before the play opens, Kotunu and his tout Samson hide his body in their truck to avoid the frenzied worshipers. Professor discovers Murano and engages him first as a win- tapper and companion who might reveal the secrets of freedom from incarnate bondage. As Professor explains, Murano walks with a limp because "when a man has one leg in each world, his legs are never the same"²²⁶. Murano has one foot on the world, and the professor hopes to find rehabilitation in this connection. Professor's followers consist of a group of drivers and truck - park layabouts who congregate every evening for "communion service", in which they share palm wine tapped and delivered by Murano. Professor attempts to discover the word by means of destruction to all manners of institutionalized corruption, such as the would-be millionaire policeman parodied by Samson and Salubi. Although Professor was expelled from the church because of drunkenness, his role as a seeker of the word gives him a certain profundity.

²²⁶ Wole Soyinka, "The Road" in *Collected Plays I*, op. cit., p. 187.

The apologetic plot concerns a strong and sympathetic hero who experiences a series of misfortunes but manages to overcome them. The reader feels respect and admiration for him.

The apologetic plot can be illustrated through the issue of repentance of Samson in *The Road* by Wole Soyinka.

In fact, Salubi needs a licence. He consults professor to forge it for him. The forger accepts after he picks up the shilling placed by Salubi on the desk. He also knows that the need is somewhat urgent. Salubi expresses his sense of obligation to get the official document, the driving licence because the job he applies for is first class. To this effect, if he does not get it, he will commit suicide. Professor asks Salubi if he thinks not enough people die there that he must come and threaten him with death. He refuses to touch his case. Salubi is very sorry and begs Professor, saying that he will never do so again. But Professor gives him such an instruction as to get out. He says it twice because he does not want to see him there again. Salubi insists on begging Professor, even in the name of his father. He also asks Kotunu for a help to beg Professor. The latter does not change his attitude and he tells him to get out of his sight. Salubi swears he will not do so again. Samson and Kotunu think that Salubi is truly repentant; they beg Professor to forgive him. Samson goes to Salubi and rifles his pocket for money, all which he places very apologetically on the table. At the end, Professor asks Salubi for the photograph as a sign of his acceptance.

One may feel respect for Salubi because of this kind of resolution.

The sentimental plot is about a weak character who wins through. This may also mean, a sympathetic hero experiences a series of misfortunes but succeeds in overcoming them all.

The illustration is the story of the beggar in Soyinka's *The Swamp Dwellers*. It can be placed within the theme of the search for individual salvation or meaningful life. In fact, the Beggar from the dry North is Igwezu's bondsman. He is conscious of his blindness, and for the need to save himself rather than to rely on external forces for salvation. His journey from the dry North to the swampy south is in search of a means of surviving. As a guest in Makuri's hut he indicates against all entreaties by his host to be like the others, his intention to till the soil where the earth is moist: "I wish to work on the soil. I wish to knead it between my fingers"²²⁷.

²²⁷ Ibid., p. 89.

Furthermore the Beggar, in spite of the hospitality accorded to him by Mukuri and Alu, does not totally subject himself to their whims and caprices. He has his conviction and must pursue them to the end without giving the impression that he is completely helpless and cannot express his feelings freely. Accordingly, the two characters assert their freedom to act in order to save their own lives not necessarily as acts of subjugation to bondage.

This story, therefore, means that in the absence of a divine force that should take care of a desperate humanity, life is in the individual's own hands and he or she is responsible for it by the pattern of choices he or she makes. This is reflected in the Beggar's determination to till the soil though he is blind. All he needs is a patch of fertile ground by which means he can save himself.

Plots of character involve some change in the moral character of the protagonists as they learn life's lessons and make deep decisions. The list of these plots is the following: the maturing plot, the reform plot, the testing plot, and the degeneration plot.

The maturing plot concerns a character who goes through life transition. This can refer to the issue of manhood training in *The Strong Breed*. In fact, Eman inherits his vocation from his father. He affords viewers a glimpse into the specific ritual process Eman would have undergone, a ritual which he performs imaginatively by observing his father with the little boat. Eman's imaginings of his father's performance of the carrier ritual serve a specific function: they help Eman to prepare himself to be a carrier in Jaguna's village. Otherwise, he would not be psychologically ready to act as a carrier; he would be an unwilling victim. Still, events all along the play imply that he decides to follow his father, meaning he is prepared to face the consequences of following him. In any case, this period of transition during which Eman prepares himself to be a carrier has something to do with death or the underworld.

The father's dress is ceremonial. He wears a white cap; calf-length, baggy, white trousers; two white rings around his eyes; and oil on his body²²⁸. A carrier must be strong of build and of character, so as not be weighed down either inside or out during his difficult passage.

²²⁸ Wole Soyinka, *Collected Plays I*, "The Strong Breed", op. cit., p. 132.

Eman builds a hut to sit alone in the forest. He conducts his manhood training there. This interrupts the successful completion of his initiation rite. His betrothed, Omae visits him, despite novitiates' not being permitted to see women during the entire process of their initiation.

The testing plot is about a noble character who is tested to the extreme. This can be illustrated by the kind of willingness manifested by Eman in Soyinka's *The Strong Breed*. To make this illustration clear, we find it better to define two key words: to test and noble. To begin with the first, to test may mean to examine in order to find quality, value, etc.²²⁹ As far as the word noble is concerned, it is an adjective that means having or showing high character and qualities²³⁰.

To come back to the illustration, from the beginning of the play Eman seems determined to assert the principle of extra-tribal human community. He says, "I find consummation only when I have spent myself for a total stranger".²³¹ Paradoxically, Eman's lover Sunma sees this attitude as "inhuman".²³² She does not realize that in clinging to his role as the outsider Eman is simply carrying on the tradition of his family, the "strong breed" of the play's title. It is only by being an outsider who tests a community's willingness to accept other human beings for the sake of their humanity (as Eman accepts Ifada, for instance) that Eman can still be "my father's son"²³³ as he says.

Nevertheless, Sunma's love for Eman is very strong enough. She has overcome her ties to her own tribe and has tried to get Eman to leave the village with her before the fatal ritual. She warns him about the xenophobia of her tribe folk and asks him: "have you not noticed how tightly we shut out strangers? Even if you lived here for a lifetime, you would remain a stranger"²³⁴. Eman responds: "perhaps that is what I like. There is peace in being a "stranger"²³⁵. The irony here is twofold. First, we notice that

²²⁹ A.S.Hornby, *The Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*, 2nd edition (London: Oxford University Press, 1963).

²³⁰ A.S. Hornby, op . cit.

²³¹ Wole Soyinka, "The Strong Breed" in *Collected Plays I*, op.cit., p. 125.

²³² Ibid., p.126.

²³³ Ibid., p.126.

²³⁴ Ibid., p.123.

²³⁵ Ibid., p. 123.

the fact of being a “stranger” only reinforces Eman’s status as a “carrier” of misfortune in his new village, a status which he thought he had rejected. The second irony is that, Eman, the champion of universal human dignity, dies in a manner that seems to role him of his humanity, killed by an animal trap set for him by his pursuers.

Plots of thought have their main focus in what the protagonist of the story thinks and feels. They can give much attention to their inner world. Plots of thought are the educational plot, the revelation plot, the affective plot, and the disillusionment plot.

The educational plot refers to a protagonist who learns something important. We find an illustration in *The Swamp Dwellers* by Soyinka. Igwezu, an ideal son of the Swamp depends on supernatural assistance for a meaningful existence. This leads him to frustration. He confronts several inexplicable mishaps both in the city and the village of the Swamp. His venture in the city fails while his brother, Awuchike who has severed all ties of family, religion and tradition, seduces his wife. His misery is recalled later on his return to the swamp where he hopes to recover from his despair by harvesting his crops, but discovers with disappointment and anguish that the floods have ruined his farm. This experience makes him question and condemn the potency of the serpent of the swamp to whom he has offered enormous sacrifices: ‘I know that the floods can come again....and corrupt the tessels of the corn’²³⁶.

Doubt about divine competence to save humanity from the vagaries of life are revoked in his questions: “If I slew the fatted calf, Kadiye, do you think the land may breathe again? would it make any difference to our fates?”²³⁷

Igwezu’s mind is now opened, he has emancipated himself from the manacles of deceit, realising in a consolatory stand. “I know that we can appease the Serpent of the Swamps and kiss Kadiye’s feet, but the vapour will still rise and corrupt the tassels of the corn”²³⁸.

Igwezu returned to the city by the decision he has taken from the complication of his own existence.

²³⁶ Ibid., p.110.

²³⁷ Ibid., p.110.

²³⁸ Ibid., p.110.

Furthermore, in Wole Soyinka's plays that constitute the corpus of this dissertation, it is also associated with the theme of sacrifice that Eman is the embodiment in *The Strong Breed*. In fact, Eman, the hero of *The Strong Breed* abandons the sacrificial role passed down to him by his father. That latter has been a member of "*The Strong Breed*" a line of "carriers" who symbolically rid their community of evil by dumping objects into the sea. Eman's father has warned him that such an ironic twist of fate is likely: "your own blood will betray you soon because you cannot hold it back"²³⁹. Eman takes his refusal a step further by leaving his native village to live with another tribe. Because he is an outsider, Eman clearly feels an affinity with Ifada, the cripple so-called "Madman" of the village. This may also mean that Eman befriends Ifada.

As we can see, Eman is a stranger who comes to this particular village to act as a teacher and share his education. Those who have much to give, he says must do so in total loneliness. On the night of the purification ceremony Eman learns something important that Ifada, a helpless idiot boy whom he has befriended has been selected "as carrier" and victim. Eman is driven by compassion to take Ifada's part in the ritual. This crisis brings back memories. We learn that Eman's father was a carrier and that Eman has fled the family tradition of symbolic sacrifice. In addition, Eman accepts his past and discovers, "...father, I am your son"²⁴⁰ one of "*the strong breed*" who must take these responsibilities upon themselves.

The effective plot is about tension between thought and feeling. The instance I cite is the central theme in Soyinka's *A Dance of the Forests*. That is to say tension between ancestral loyalty and the temptations of the modern world, as well as the possibility of progress.

In fact, the play presents a complex interplay between gods, mortals, the dead and the human beings. *A Dance of the Forests* is a classic piece of writing which influenced the political scenario of Nigeria during its freedom struggle. The living beings have invited two glorious forefathers, the Dead Man and the Dead Woman to

²³⁹ Ibid., p.134.

²⁴⁰ Ibid., p.145.

take part in a feast and celebration of the “Gathering of the Tribes”²⁴¹. The primary divine conflict resides in the eternal bitter quarrel between Ogun, the god of creativity and Eshuoro, the god of destruction. It is in this respect that there is tension between ancestral loyalty and the temptations of the modern world.

When the play opens, the gathering of the tribes is about to take place. Three humans find themselves in the forest with the Dead Man and the Dead Woman, Demoke the carver, who has just finished carving the splendid totem for the gathering of the tribes, Rola, a beautiful prostitute, and Adenebi, a counsellor. A fourth man announces himself as Obaneji, a filing clerk for the court, but in reality he is forest head or the supreme deity. Tension between thought and feeling results from the mismanagement of Adenebi, and “conflict of generations”.

To begin with mismanagement, Adenebi the counsellor has taken bribes in exchange for altering the number of passengers allowed on lorries, and as a consequence, an overloaded lorry has crashed and burned, and many people have been killed. In addition, Demoke’s father plans to get rid of the dead pair by getting a beat-up lorry nicknamed the Chimney of Ereko to drive through the forest, shedding smoke and petrol fumes. That evaporation drives out the forest creatures and spirits, holding leaves to their noises.

As for the second cause we refer to Eshuoro, the god of destruction, Ogun, the god of construction, and Demoke, the carver. It is true that Demoke is a sculptor in wood. When he carved the totem, it was done on a tree sacred to Oro. Demoke had to have the top cut off the araba tree in order to carve it, but he was unable to do so himself. Oremole, a follower of Oro, and Demoke’s apprentice, climbed to the top and mocked Demoke for his inability. Demoke infuriated, pulled Oremole down and he fell dead. Then possessed by his god Ogun, patron god of carvers, Demoke cut the top off the tree and carved the totem. Then, after Demoke’s self-facing in the form of the admission of the acts, Ogun, his protector god, enters as though to prevent the dead from becoming accusers in the way Murete means. Ogun, a strong and sympathetic figure, tries to exonerate Demoke. Ogun says that he will not desert Demoke, and seeks

²⁴¹ Wole Soyinka, ‘‘A Dance of the Forests’’ in *Collected Plays I*, op. cit., p.11.

to take all the responsibility on to himself. Ogun is a god, and wishes to protect Demoke who is his man, but this does not prove to be possible.

When part II opens, Eshuoro enters. He is angry at the lopping off Oro's tree, and he intends to create whatever confusion and trouble he can. He says, 'Aroni means to let the humans judge themselves', and he means to let them go afterwards. 'Aroni is acting as Forest Head's right-hand spirit, in an attempt neither to judge nor to punish the living but to bring them to some greater awareness. But Eshuoro is determined that the humans will not escape from this drama without punishment and suffering-not even deserved suffering, just suffering.

The struggle becomes a battle of gods. Forest Head wants to direct the humans towards self – awareness, although Eshuoro wants to drive men into the deepest slavery.

Tension between thought and feelings can also refer to the issue of the opposition of Professor to the church and its bishop in *The Road*.

In fact, Professor, the protagonist of *The Road*, searches for the word, or logos, the inward rational principle of language, consciousness and the natural universe. As the proprietor of the Aksident Store, he also dedicates his life to the knowledge and propagation of death, which the word symbolizes: 'the word may be found companion not to life, but death. ' So, Professor stands for civilization and literacy. He has the power of the word and this power sustains him above his fellows. Professor uses his literacy to forge documents such as driver licence.

In a subsequent scene, the professor in his former church going days would bow at every mention of the name Jesus Christ during the service²⁴². This distracting mannerism, together with his habit of shaking his head in disapproval and taking notes on the bishop's grammatical errors, held priority in the interest of the congregation over the actual sermon. Then the bishop thought that he would teach Professor a lesson by using Jesus Christ in every other sentence, prompting him to rise, bow, and sit like a marionette. To be clear, Professor and the bishop did have a fight (a duel of gentlemen), because the bishop thought he has B.A., B.D standing for Bachelor of Divinity²⁴³.

²⁴² Wole Soyinka, "The Road" in *Collected Plays I*, op. cit., p.163.

²⁴³ Ibid., p. 163.

The disillusionment plot deals with exploitation, institutionalized corruption and expelling in *The Road* by Wole Soyinka. These issues reveal Professor's loss of ideals looked upon as perfect. That loss goes with his own attitude of searching for the word which symbolizes death that Murano is the dramatic embodiment.

In fact, Professor stands in opposition to the church and its bishop. He also forges driver's licences, and he removes traffic signs to make it the source of accident and sudden death from which he collects spare parts for the flourishing of his own Aksident Store.

The author could be satirizing the academic professional obsessed with relative as opposed to universal truth, with conventional as opposed to natural law. In trying to exploit Murano, Professor encroaches on the power of the god Ogun, with fatal consequences. What he fails to understand is that the word cannot be experienced indirectly through a medium such as Murano.

III-1-2-Reading Through Flashbacks.

Flashbacks are parts of a literary work that show a scene early in time than the rest of the work.²⁴⁴ Before getting to the heart of the matter, that is to decipher plots with flashback in the play *A Dance of the Forests*, we find it better to start by reviewing the action of the play. This may also mean to say what it is all about.

In fact, the main theme in it is the recurring past, or the relation of tradition to history. "The gathering of the tribes"²⁴⁵ is about to take place, that is independence, and the people have invited the dead to take part hoping for representatives who will confirm the glory of the ancient lost empires. To their disappointment, the Dead Man and Dead Woman who turn up are nothing but illustrious in appearance. They are uncertain. But, having been conjured up, they refuse to go away. Demoke, the carver, who has just finished a splendid totem for the occasion, Rola, the prostitute; and Adenebi, the crooked counsellor went into the forest with Forest Head who turns out to be the chief deity. Forest Head wants to direct humans towards a greater self-awareness, towards a freedom from fear and from shackles of some aspects of the past.

²⁴⁴ A.S. Hornby, *Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* (London: Oxford University Press, 1974).

²⁴⁵ Wole Soyinka, "A Dance of the Forests" in *Collected Plays I*, op. cit., p.11.

The flashback scene which is re – created is the court of Mata Kharibu, ‘about eight centuries back’.²⁴⁶ Aroni comments ironically, ‘one of their great empires. I forget which.’²⁴⁷

It becomes clear that we are witnessing archetypes. The same basic characters go on and are reborn into each generation. Whatever individual forms they may take, they hark to forgotten ancestors. Madame Tortoise, the self – seeking woman, lacking tenderness and filled only with ambition, is the ancestress of Rola. Eight centuries back she was the wife of Emperor Mata Kharibu. The court poet was Demoke in a previous life. The Historian’s master was Agboreko, Elder of Sealed Lips. All these, in their past selves have their present characters and characteristics. The poet lets his novice fall to his death in rescuing the queen’s canary from the roof-top.

The court poet despises the queen, Madame Tortoise, but although he refers to her in asides as a slut, he permits himself to be ordered utterly by her, the birth goddess, because at heart his own violence is satisfied by the novice’s death coupled with the sexual overtones of the queenly command.

But the real revelation of the past is yet to come. Demoke, Rola and Adenebi are seen in their past roles as essentially their present selves, although the Demoke of the past seems entirely a more naïve and less inner-knowing man. But then we see that these three are not only present-day beings to appear in the drama of the past. The Dead Man, the shabby ancestor, has in fact been a captain of genuine integrity. Mata Kharibu, a representative of the kingly past, whose grandeur, such as it was, was based on ruthlessness, says ‘Do you dare to question my words?’ and the Warrior (the Dead Man) replies; ‘ No, terrible one, only your commands.’²⁴⁸ The Warrior refuses to command his man to fight a frivolous and unjust war, comparable to the Trojan war, over the possession of Madame Tortoise, whom Mata Kharibu stole from a rival king. The Physician at the court tries to dissuade the Warrior from his stand, implying that history will not appreciate the actions of a man of integrity. The Warrior knows this,

²⁴⁶ Ibid., p.46.

²⁴⁷ Ibid., p.46.

²⁴⁸ Ibid., p.48.

he says, ‘Unborn generations will, as we have done, eat up one another.’²⁴⁹ The Physician pleads with the Warrior to release his men from allegiance to him. Suddenly, then, the Warrior understands. His men are loyal more to him, personally, than they are to Mata Kharibu. He sees that the Establishment is actually afraid. ‘You are afraid. Mata Kharibu is afraid.’²⁵⁰ The physician says, ‘But I am right. Perhaps I have started a new disease that catches quickly.’²⁵¹

The Historian (Adenebi, as self – deceptive as he is in the present) advises his master, Mata Kharibu, about the fate of the rebellious Warrior: ‘This renegade must be treated as a slave.’²⁵² The emperor agrees – ‘sell that man down the river.’²⁵³ And so it is. The man who questions authority is sold as a slave. Before his final departure, Madame Tortoise approaches him. She tries to persuade him to overthrow Mata Kharibu and take her as his queen. The Warrior refuses. Madame Tortoise brings in Warrior’s pregnant wife (the present-day Dead Woman) and says she does not intend to be spurned by a common soldier. The Warrior’s wife begs for mercy.

In the audience of gods who are watching the re-creation of the past, Eshuoro, Ogun and Aroni discuss what they have seen and its relationship to the present. Ogun wants to protect Demoke, Eshuoro wants to destroy him. Forest Head is trying to teach not only men but gods. Ogun still maintains ‘he has no guilt. I, Ogun, swear that his hands were mine in every action of his life.’²⁵⁴ But Forest Head replies, ‘will you all never rid yourselves of these conceits?’²⁵⁵

Furthermore a Questioner appears, accompanied by the Dead Woman. She is asked about her ever – pregnant state – ‘what made you death! To the life that begged within you? Had he no claim?’ Forest Head tells her ‘... there is no choice but one of

²⁴⁹ Ibid., p.49.

²⁵⁰ Ibid., p .50.

²⁵¹ Ibid.,p .50.

²⁵² Ibid.,p .51.

²⁵³ Ibid., p.52.

²⁵⁴ Ibid., p.59.

²⁵⁵ Ibid., p.59.

suffering.’ The Dead Man (Warrior) now reveals that after his castration he was sold as a slave for a flash of rum. This must be one of the very places in contemporary Nigerian literature in which the question of the slave trade is mentioned. Either it is too far back in the past, or else there is some deep reluctance to look at it.

These flashback scenes serve a specific function that is to relate the new world to the old one. In other words, this shows that the past is repeated in the present. As *A Dance of the Forests* was written for a special occasion, the Nigerian independence celebrations in October 1960, and if the people were not alert and vigil, history would repeat itself and the people would repeat their mistakes, which would eventually prove detrimental to the evolution and progress of their country. The emphasis is laid on the fact that it would do good for the Nigerians to remember the bloody past and learn lessons from it, and take care not to repeat those heinous and grievous crimes in the future. We may think of the guilt the old African Empires which sold their own people as slaves.

In addition, events from the past are also examined in *The Swamp Dwellers*.

At the beginning of the plays, the parents are waiting for the return of one of their sons who may give them news of their other son. The mother inoculates herself against disaster by claiming to believe that the missing son has been drawn in the swamp; the father pooh – poohs these ideas. It is clearly an old argument. They are actually bricking about it, releasing in this apparent callousness the unbearable uncertainties in their minds. They are peevish, perverse, and anxious to score a point, each set in their own pattern of thought, yet fitfully to land each other some mental protection – a long – tried, unsentimental affection appearing in wry humour and sometimes finding itself involved in a warmer vein of memory. All these threads and many subtler ones interweave across the opening dialogue, superficially banal, till we see a whole married life revealed before us, typical yet highly individual:

Alu: Can you see him?

Makuri: See who?

Alu: My son Igwezu. Who else?

Makuri: I did not come to look for him. Came only to see if the rain looks like stopping.

Alu: Well does it?

Makuri [grunts.]

Alu [Goes back to her work. Then -]: It is time he was back. He went hours and hours ago.

Makuri: He knows the way. He’s a grown – up man, with a wife.

Alu [flaring up with aged lack of heat.]: If you had any good at all in you, you'd go and look for him.

Makuri: And catch my death of cramp? Not likely ... and anyway, [getting warmer] what's preventing you from going?²⁵⁶

Alu: I want to be here when he gives me the news. I don't want to fall down dead out in the open.²⁵⁷

Apart from this part of the dialogue; there is another which reinforces the idea of flashback scene in this play. It is the one that shows the childhood of the hero and other earlier aspects of his lifetime, that is to say his place of birth. This can be described as follows:

Alu: Suppose he's lost his way? Suppose he went walking in the swamp and couldn't find his way back?

Makuri [in bewilderment]: Him? Get lost? Woman, isn't it your son we're speaking of? The one who was born here, and has lived here all his life.²⁵⁸

As we can see, Alu and Makuri are talking about Igwezu, their son. They remember his place of birth, the swamp. Igwezu is a grown – up man who has gone into the big town to try his hand at making money. This may also mean that on his return to the swamp, Igwezu would not lose his way because he was born in the swamp and he has lived there all his life.

There are few examples of flashback scenes in the play *The Strong Breed*. Eman's defiant behaviour as a carrier different from past carriers is provided in the flashback scenes where he is made to understand his position as one of the strong breed. Re-enacting scenes from Eman's past and taking the entire play from the present to his past, and back to the present, serves an important purpose: Eman sees an integrated picture of his entire life. Through these moving images of his own past, Eman understands the present, particularly, the reason for this suffering and prepares himself for his death which will be in the near future. In this play we consider three flashback scenes; and each deals with the stage of the development of Eman's comprehension and acceptance of his destiny.

²⁵⁶ Wole Soyinka, "The Swamp Dwellers" in *Collected Plays 1*, op. cit., p.81.

²⁵⁷ Ibid., P.82.

²⁵⁸ Ibid., p.82.

In the first one, Eman watches his father from the outside looking at himself as a young man. By the last flashback, when he is close to his own death, Eman steps into the memory frame. Now the young from the past and the old carrier – Eman in the present merges, and Eman converses with his father.

In the first flashback scene again, young Eman is seen arguing and rejecting his father's work: "I am totally unfitted for your call ... there are other tasks in life father. This one is not for me. There are even greater things you know nothing of"²⁵⁹. But the Old Man firmly believes that it will be impossible for Eman to run away from his fate. His argument is based on the knowledge of the unseverable blood – tie which binds Eman to him. It has been the tasks of his ancestors, and Eman must continue the tradition of belonging to the strong breed. "It is only a strong breed," he tells Eman, "that can tie this boat to the river year after year and wax stronger on it. I have taken down each year's evils for over twenty years. I hope you would follow me"²⁶⁰. This is Eman's fate although he refuses to accept. His father's conviction of the inescapability of his destiny is rooted in a deeper, an instinctive kind of knowledge:

You will answer the urge of your blood ... Our blood is strong like no other. Anything you do in life must be less than this, son ... your own blood will betray you son, because you cannot hold it back. If you make it do less than this, it will rush to your head and burst it open. I say what I know my son.²⁶¹

The Old man's words, like a prophecy from the past, are being acted out in the present with Eman as Carrier. What Eman had by individual and willed choice rejected has always remained a part of him.

The image of the young, self – willed Eman who arrogantly and in ignorance rejects his father's warning is reminiscent of the proud.

As for the second flashback scene, it depicts Eman's abrupt departure from the village, "seeking the vain shrine of secret strength ... I do not really know for what great meaning I searched. When I returned, I could not be certain I had found it"²⁶². In addition, "My life here died with Omae", he had told his father when grief had

²⁵⁹ Wole Soyinka, "The Strong Breed" in *Collected Plays I*, op. cit., p.134.

²⁶⁰ Ibid., p.133.

²⁶¹ Ibid., p.134.

²⁶² Ibid., p.143.

overwhelmed him and he could not understand the meaning of Omae's death. Now in the present he recalls his father's words,

Omae died giving birth to your child and you think the world is ended ... Don't you know it was the same with you? And me? No woman survives the bearing of the strong ones. Son, it is not the mouth of the boaster that says he belongs to the strong breed. It is the tongue that is red with pain and black with sorrow''.²⁶³

Furthermore in the last flashback scenes, where past and present merge, Eman talks to his father. He is trying desperately to keep himself alive, looking for a drink of water. In this scene between father and son, Eman makes a poignant plea to his father to accept him. The Old Man knows of Eman's imminent death and tries to ward him off from going toward the stream because the priests have laid the death – trap on the path.

Eman: It is your son. Eman. [He moves nearer.] Don't you want to look at me? It is I, Eman [He moves nearer still.]
 Old Man: You are coming too close. Don't you know what I carry on my head?
 Eman: But Father, I am your son.
 Old Man: Then go back. We cannot give the two of us.
 Eman [visibly relieved]: I only wanted to be sure. My throat is burning. I have been looking for the stream all night.
 Old Man: It is the other way ... Go now.
 Eman: No, I will only get lost again. I shall go with you.
 Old Man: Go back my son. Go back.
 Eman: Why? Won't you even look at me?
 Old Man: Listen to your father. Go back.
 Eman: But father! [He makes to hold him. Instantly the old man breaks into a rapid trop. Eman hesitates, then follows, his strength nearly gone.]
 Eman: wait father. I am coming with you ... wait ... wait for me father ... [there is a sound of twigs breaking, of a sudden trembling in the branches. Then silence.]²⁶⁴

Within the experience of the transitional gulf that Eman goes through, knowledge comes not with language but with visual images. For the rest, it is through the images that are drawn on Eman's mind that he projects his comprehension.

At last, flashback scenes stud the pages of *The Road*.

²⁶³ Ibid., p.133.

²⁶⁴ Ibid., p.145.

The play is about the ritual festival of the Drivers during which there is the ‘Feast of Ogun, the Dog – eater’²⁶⁵ with the idea that the road eats dogs that get in the way of the wheels of the lorries. Murano is killed, just before the play opens. Kotunu and his tout Samson hide his body in their truck to avoid the frenzied worshippers.

In the opening mime, Samson sits on professor’s chair, placed on top of the table in the presence of Salubi, a would-be chauffer, and pretends to be an ‘African Millionaire’ flinging bribes to a line of police.

Kotunu, after killing Murano and witnessing an accident at the broken bridge, abandons the road (as a driver) and becomes manager of the Aksident store. He stocks the store from the abundant sacrifice of wrecks and road victims.

In fact, the climatic flashback scene in Part Two of *The Road* re-enacts the day of the drivers’ festival when Murano was knocked down by ‘No Danger, No Delay,’²⁶⁶ Samson and Kotunu’s ‘Mammy Wagon.’

Furthermore, this part opens with Samson and Kotunu re-enacting the bridge accident for professor. Just as they approach the bridge, an overcrowded truck passes them and plunges through the rotten planks of the bridge. The violent screech of Kotunu’s brakes is heard in the theatre as they pull up to peer down the chasm.

This is the essence of a series of classification questions by Professor and answer from Kotunu and Samson:

Prof: ... now tell me ... What happened at the bridge? You say the lorry overtook you – good. [Writes]. Lorry was travelling at excessive speed. ... What did you see friend, what did you see?²⁶⁷

Kotunu: There was this lorry ...

Prof: Were you accessory before the fact?

Kotunu: Even before the bridge, I saw what was yet to happen.

Prof: [puts down the pen. Softly]: You swear to that?

Kotunu: It was a full load and it took some moments overtaking us, heavy it was.

Samson: sensible men turn from what they may not see. Don’t you agree Professor?

Prof: get one of those herbalists to inoculate him then ...

Kotunu: I swear it was what I saw. The lorry was filled with people but there was not one face among them [the Professor continues scribbling fast.]

²⁶⁵ Wole Soyinka, ‘The Road’ in *Collected Plays I*, op. cit., p.160.

²⁶⁶ Ibid., p.204.

²⁶⁷ Ibid., p.195.

Samson: Because they had rags on their faces. It was only a kola nut lorry from the North and the rear half was filled with people. The trunk was top – heavy as always. And they had cloth on their faces to keep out the dust.

Kotunu: ... The wraith of dust which pursued them.

Samson: ... How could you see anything for dust? Only vague shapes ...

Kotunu: But it cleared I tell you. Before my eyes it cleared and I saw I was mistaken. It was an open truck ... we caught up with them finally ... at the broken bridge, and you shouted ²⁶⁸.

The function that this flashback may serve is that of showing professor's attachment to his search for the word which is found a companion not to life, but to death. Characters make their living from the road and its traffic. Some of them even chase after accidents and remove things of value from vehicles – even the clothes of the dead – and sell them in the ‘care of Accident Supply store.’

In addition, the technique of writing with flashbacks followed by Soyinka in his plays is the same in *A Grain of Wheat* by Ngugi Wa Thiong'o.²⁶⁹ It tells the story of a village as Kenyan independence approaches. One of the fundamental themes of the novel is betrayal and the consequent need of the betrayer to expiate the sense of guilt that results. And, there is a love triangle involving Mumbi and the rivals for her love, the collaborator Karanja and the carpenter Gikonyo, who eventually marries her.

Furthermore, several events from the past are examined through flashback but from the point of view and of different characters. This gives a chance to see how the same situation is interpreted in different ways. For instance, Karanja runs two races, and both of them aim at trying to win Mumbi's affection. They also happen at different points in time.

In fact, just as Mugo re – enacts his life in the four days leading up to Uhuru, the same pattern produces itself in Gikonyo's mind and life. At the celebration he enters a foot race and his main opponent is Karanja, father of Mumbi's bastard child, Gikonyo's ancient rival for her love. The race is a re – enactment of the race to the railway platform years before, which Gikonyo lost to Karanja but which, paradoxically, won him Mumbi. The same thing happens again, and the race becomes a contest not between himself and Karanja, but between them for Mumbi. Gikonyo

²⁶⁸ Ibid., p.196.

²⁶⁹ G.D. Killiam, *An Introduction to the Writing of Ngugi* (London: Heinemann, 1980), p.53.

stumbles, and he is injured and taken to hospital. That is the essence of the following extract:

At night he went over his life and his experiences in the seven detention camps. ... 'What difference was there between him and Karanja or Mugo or those who had openly betrayed people and worked with Whiteman to save themselves? ...Gikonyo shuddered at the thought of losing everything'.²⁷⁰

In addition, Karanja is with the others of the village who await the arrival of the train. He has raced with Gikonyo and he has won. But Mumbi has lingered behind with Gikonyo. Karanja feels desolate. The train's arrival affords Karanja a moment of utter clarity of perception:

Suddenly the whistle shrilled, the train pulled out the station, and Karanja who was watching it intently, had a strange experience. First the whistle had shrilled and the coaches clinked into his flesh. ... He saw the clearly, he could swear afterwards. ... The whole country went in circles, faster and faster, before his eyes and then abruptly stopped. ...nothing moved or made noise. Karanja was frightened by this absolute cessation of all motion and noise and he looked about him to confirm the truth of what he saw. ... Everybody was running away ... Karanja braced himself for the struggle, the fight to live. I must clear out of this place, he told himself, without moving. The earth was going round again. I must run, he thought, it cannot be helped, why should I fear to trample on the children, the lame and the weak when others are doing it?²⁷¹

As well, Karanja, like Gikonyo, knows he is not made of the stuff of heroes. His hope of winning the love of Mumbi forestalls any thoughts he might have had of joining the cause: was any separation from Mumbi freedom?²⁷²

III-2-READING THROUGH DRAMATIC STRUCTURES, BALANCE AND DUALITY.

Our main concerns in this section are: to determine the styles chosen by the author in his selected plays for this dissertation, then to study and analyse them one by one. The last point of this part addresses the main types of balance whose manifestations are demonstrated by Wole Soyinka in the plays. In addition, the ways things are organized in the world reveal aspects of balance. One may illustrate this with the

²⁷⁰ Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, *A Grain of Wheat* (London: Heinemann, 1967), p.212.

²⁷¹ Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, op. cit., p.82.

²⁷² Ibid., p.199.

following dualities: man and woman, God and the Devil, the left and the right, good and bad, the top and the bottom, the beginning and the end, etc. In addition, the concept of balance is associated with symmetry that is beauty resulting from right relations of parts; quality of harmony or agreement between parts; having usually two exactly similar parts on either side of a dividing line²⁷³.

In relation with the definition above, we are symmetrical after-all two eyes, two ears, two feet, two hands, etc. . . . Here, again one may imagine a central axis that separates the sides of the object. There is also the idea that both sides have exactly the same weight, for a man to stand, walk, ride a bike, etc., for a literary work to be divided into equal parts.

Furthermore, balance has also something with dissymmetry when, in a literary work, here a play, elements of literature fall into categories showing a clear case of distorted, symmetry and antisymmetry.

Then another aspect of balance is asymmetry. It is somehow interesting to consider this aspect. In fact, near symmetry is based on symmetry but the two halves are not exactly the same²⁷⁴. Slight variations will probably not change the balance but there is more potential for variety and hence more interest. When the two sides become too different, symmetry ceases to exist and balance develops another concept, that is to say, asymmetry.

In this analysis, an attempt is made to investigate the principles of balance: symmetry, dissymmetry, antissymmetry, and asymmetry that operate in the plays under scrutiny. The plays that constitute the corpus are: *A Dance of the Forests*²⁷⁵, *The Swamp Dwellers*²⁷⁶, *The Strong Breed*²⁷⁷, *The Road*²⁷⁸, *The Lion and the Jewel*²⁷⁹,

²⁷³ A.S. Hornby, *The Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* (London: Oxford University Press, 1974).

²⁷⁴ Veronika Makarova, 'Symmetry, Dissymmetry, and Antisymmetry' in Dostoesky's *Crime and Punishment*. <http://www.mi.sanu.ac.rs/vismath/proceedings/makarova.htm>. (March 2015).

²⁷⁵ Wole Soyinka, *Collected Plays1: A Dance of the Forests, The Swamp Dwellers, The Strong Breed, The Road, The Bacchae of Euripides* (London: Oxford University Press, 1973) p. 1.

²⁷⁶ Wole Soyinka, op. cit., p78.

²⁷⁷ Ibid., p113.

²⁷⁸ Ibid., p 147.

²⁷⁹ Wole Soyinka, *Collected Plays 2: The Lion and the Jewel, Kongi's Harvest, The Trials of Brother Jero, Jero's Metamorphosis, Madmen and Specilist* (London: Oxford University Press, 1974) p.1.

*Kongi's Harves*²⁸⁰, and *The Trials of Brother Jero*²⁸¹. What we have just said may also mean that the result expected from this analysis is that certain near symmetrical, dissymmetric, antissymmetric and asymmetric patterns are found in those plays.

Indeed, the play is a literary work with a unique nature that makes it possible to be read and then also to be performed. Unlike the prose and poetry which depend on narration, the play is presented only through dialogue, in acts, in scenes, in movements or parts, etc..

However, each dramatist is free to adopt his or her own style. In this respect, some of the plays under investigation have not been divided by the playwright.

It is true that the play is made up of the following main literary elements: character, plot, setting, theme, etc.

So, we are going to analyse Wole Soyinka's plays in terms of duality, balance, to demonstrate that symmetry, dissymmetry, antissymmetry, and asymmetry are the major structural elements in the plays which are manifested at the levels of composition and text structure, characters, important objects and ideas.

The methodology we choose at this level is that, each play must be viewed separately in terms of balance, and different plays with the same aspects of balance will be mentioned together with a special reference to their common characteristics.

Before the analysis of plays, we find it better to define again the word 'symmetry'. In fact, symmetry may mean beauty resulting from right relations of parts; quality of harmony or agreement in size, design, etc. between parts of the literary works. This may also mean that those works have usually two exactly similar parts on either side of a dividing line or object.

The elements to consider in this symmetrical analysis of Soyinka's plays selected to constitute the corpus of this dissertation are: styles or divisions of plays, characters, ideas, text structures and compositions.

III-2-1-Balance and Duality.

Balance and duality operate in *A Dance of the Forests*, *The Swamp Dwellers*, and *The Road*.

²⁸⁰ Wole Soyinka, op. cit., p 59.

²⁸¹ Ibid., p 143.

To begin with *A Dance of the Forests*, we actually analyse this play in terms of symmetry. Wole Soyinka sufficiently demonstrates it when he divides this play into two parts: Part one and Part two. Each part has about thirty pages.

Then, to better achieve the objective and in order to help an easy reading and understanding of the plays under scrutiny, we have ourselves divided each part in many subdivisions. This shows that the concern of symmetry also regards these subdivisions. In fact, the last subpart of each part, that is to say the sixth of Part one and the fourth of Part two deals with the same issue: ‘‘pollution’’ for the sixth subdivision title of Part one, and ‘‘violation of nature’’ of the fourth subdivision title of Part two.

In addition, the first subdivision of Part one entitled ‘‘The beginning of the gathering of the tribe’’ and the first of Part two bearing the title of ‘‘revenge and uncertainty’’ prove some symmetrical aspects to the extent that, in Part one, when the play opens the gathering of the tribes is about to take place, and the two glorious ancestors invited by the living characters wonder whether they are expected and /or appear earlier on the land of those who invite them. One may also think that those forefathers are surprised to find themselves among the living characters.

It is in this respect that the Dead Man said:

‘‘Will you take my case, sir?
[Adenebi stars, stares, and runs off.].
Dead Woman: Will you take my case?
Demoke: Can’t you see? I am in a hurry.²⁸²

This passage from the play illustrates better the kind of uncertainty that is in the mind of the dead characters, I mean the Dead Man and the Dead Woman.

Furthermore, Part one and Part two have close relations. In other words, Part one seems to be the continuation of Part two. The reason for this is that events from Part one are the causes of the consequences that stand the pages of Part two. That is why in Part one we find such subdivisions entitled as follows: ‘‘corruption’’, ‘‘love’’, and ‘‘pollution’’. These are actually what produces effects on characters to ‘‘revenge’’, to ‘‘direction to self- awareness’’ to suffering and alienation’’ to ‘‘refusal to fight’’, of Part two subdivisions titles.

²⁸² Wole Soyinka, ‘‘A Dance of the Forests’’ in *Collected Plays I*, op. cit., p. 7.

Through this analysis, one may understand that the idea of symmetry in Part one of *A Dance of the Forests* touches pagination and characterization. In fact some of the sub-parts of Part one have the same number of pages and the same number of characters. The instances of illustration are: the first subdivision that counts eight pages that is from page seven to page fourteen and eight characters, the third and the fourth sub-parts have each four pages and four characters.

It is true that the situation is not the same in Part two. But in these two different parts of the play, there are sub-sections, from different part of course, that have the same number of page. The second sub-parts of Part one and Part two have each six pages, and the fifth sub-division of Part one and the fifth sub-part of Part two have each five pages.

Indeed in the first subdivision of Part one, characters visibly go by pair: Dead Man and Dead Woman, Demoke and Rola, Adenebi and Obaneji, Aroni and Murete. There are two categories of characters. The first one is that of the supernatural characters including five of them: Dead Man, Dead Woman, Obaneji, Aroni and Forest Head. The second category refers to the living characters namely Demoke, Rola and Adenebi. At this level of analysis, we discover a combination of two worlds: the world of the supernatural characters and the world of the living characters. Symmetry between the gods is seen when the god Aroni receives the permission of Forest Head to select instead two obscure spirits of the restless dead: Dead Man and Dead Woman.

Then, each of the three living characters has two existences throughout the whole play. In other words, each of the living characters has compound roles.

Demoke in his previous existence had been a Court Poet. Rola acted out as Madame Tortoise. And Adenebi had been a corrupt Court Historian. In addition, there is a female character in each group: Dead Woman for the supernatural characters, and Rola for the living or human characters.

Furthermore, the double responsibility of Demoke is also seen in his life. He carves the totem, and prays the gods to delegate ancestors to represent the past to the celebration.

Then, when reading the play it comes to light that, the divinities and the human beings simultaneously organise the feast. To this we add that, the world of the gods has quite all its members. This world is a crowd organised with grades from lowest to highest, the first being Eshuoro. The other gods are Forests Head, Aroni, Murete and Ogun.

The double culpability of Rola in the past and in the present has been revealed to lead the three human beings into the forest. She is responsible of the mortal quarrel between his rivals.

As for Adenebi, he takes bribe to alter the number of passengers allow in the lorry. As a consequence there had been an accident killing many people. Eight centuries ago, three crimes are similar. First all, Demoke the Court Poet let his disciple kill him when looking for the canary placed by the queen on the roof. This is similar to his present existence especially when his apprentice falls down from the tree and dies. Secondly, Madame Tortoise is associated with the decadence of the empire. Finally, Adenebi the royal historian took bribe because of his self-satisfaction to the slave trade.

In addition, the relation between some of the characters from different categories reveals symmetry. It is the case of Demoke a human or living character, and Ogun a supernatural character. In fact, Demoke had to carve the splendid totem for the gathering of the tribes. In this respect, he cut off the araba tree sacred to Oro who represented the punitive principle to carve that totem. Then, he was possessed by his god Ogun, patron of carvers, god of creativity.

As the introductory part of this section has addressed the meaning of balance that includes opposition or duality, proof-reading of the play, *A Dance of the Forests* shows many levels where opposition, duality if not dissymmetry are observed.

To begin with the division of the play, *A Dance of the Forests* is divided into two parts. Some of the theme read in Part one are not found in Part two and vice versa. It is the case of ‘‘confession’’ in the third subdivision of Part one, and ‘‘direction to self awareness’’ in the third subdivision of Part two.

As for characters, there is a kind of opposition between the world of the living characters to that of the gods: Demoke and Eshuoro.

Opposition is also seen between gods: Ogun and Eshuoro, and in the concert of discordance between the human character namely Demoke and the couple of the dead characters: Dead Man and Dead Woman.

In addition, two important objects reveal opposition: the tree and the totem. Then, the forests, the living characters and the supernatural characters on the one hand and Demoke, Eshuoro on the other hand are read in the play, and help read it at the level of dissymmetry. The reason for this is that, first of all, we see a clearing forest opening its doors to both living characters and supernatural characters. In other words the forest

receives them. But unfortunately harmony does not exist among them. The living characters and the supernatural characters do not combine to form one entity, and here the plot that is not easy and helpful to decipher the events in the play because of ambiguity shows the simultaneous organisation of the feasts.

At last, the central theme of this play actually places literary elements of this work in the perspective of dissymmetry. In fact that theme is phrased as stated: tension between ancestral loyalty and the temptations of modern world, and the possibility of progress.

Dissymmetry is also read in the story about Mata Kharibu, Warrior and Physician. The Dead Man, the shabby ancestor has in fact been a Captain of genuine integrity. Mata Kharibu, representative of the kingly past, whose grandeur, such as it was based on ruthlessness, says 'Do you dare to question my words?'²⁸³ And the Warrior or Dead Man replies, 'No, terrible one only your commands.'²⁸⁴ The Warrior refuses to command his men to fight a frivolous and unjust war, comparable to the Trojan War, over the possession of Madame Tortoise, whom Mata Kharibu stole from a rival king. The Physician at the court tries to persuade the Warrior from his stand, implying that history will not appreciate the actions of a man of integrity.

As for *The Swamp Dwellers*, one may find out indications of symmetry in the play. The level of composition and text structure, the literary work *The Swamp Dwellers* is played as a whole that is to say the author himself does not divide the work into parts. But this fact does not prevent us from doing a possible division of this play that is why we subdivide it into four parts or sections. Among which, the first and the second subdivisions call our attention at this level of description. It is the notion of number we consider. In fact, the first subsection has eight pages and four characters. What we find out here is the situation of proportion to the extent that four is the half of eight. This fact is very interesting because it is also seen in the second subdivision: six pages cover this part, and three characters play roles in it. At this level the fact is that three is the half of six. So, it seems clear that the notion half is an essential one in Wole Soyinka's fiction.

And, a special reference to *A Dance of the Forests* can be made because in this play the author names one of his characters the Half – Child.

²⁸³ Wole Soyinka, "A Dance of the Forests" in *Collected Plays 1*, op. cit., p 48.

²⁸⁴ Ibid., p48.

Apart from these subdivisions, the fourth has a symmetric relation with the first subpart to the extent that four characters act out in each part. In addition, the first subdivision and the fourth, that is the last subsection have a symmetric relation. In fact, the first section is entitled ‘‘In the wait’’ and the fourth part is ‘‘The arriving’’, so, one may understand that the attitude of complete and total satisfaction of Makuri and Alu who have been waiting for their son Igwezu in the first subdivision, ‘‘arriving’’ in the fourth and the last subpart. Then, the second and the third sub-parts are symmetric at the level of ideas.

The reason for this is that, these two subdivisions represent the period before the arriving of the son that Makuri and Alu receive the visit of the Beggar in the second subpart, and the Holy Man in the third section. What these two intermediate subdivisions have in common is the fact that both of the characters who have been received in Makuri and Alu’s hut were not expected or invited.

When referring back to *A Dance of the Forests*, the situation is not the same because in this play the dead characters have actually been invited even though they had the impression that they were not expected for.

As this analysis goes on, we demonstrate duality at the level of important objects, mainly places. In *The Swamp Dwellers*, the whole action of the play takes place in the swamp. But other locations are indicated in this literary work. So, the swamp is opposed to the city. To view the play, the important thing is that Igwezu leaves his native swamp and he goes to the city in order to try his hand for a better life. Then the dry south is opposed to the north. Here, the play writes that the Beggar is from the south. The rotting swamps and the dry south in *The Swamp Dwellers* are symbolic representations of the inexplicable and hazardous universe in which man finds himself. As for duality in idea, the Beggar’s faith promises paradise. This place or condition of perfect happiness is not attainable. The Beggar’s south journey is a rejection of this faith and a determination to till the soil. One may see the Beggar in the attitude of acceptance of faith, and rejection of the same faith.

Furthermore, Igwezu and Kadiye who is Serpent of the swamp and a priest end in the attitude of opposition. In fact, before going to the city Igwezu offers his goat to the priest so that the latter may protect his farm with divine power. Igwezu has no divine assistance; as a consequence, the floods come and ruin the farm.

At the level of characters the author also demonstrates the feature of two, double or pair. Illustration in *The Swamp Dwellers* are, first of all, Makuri and Alu. They are a couple, mother and father of Igwezu. Secondly, we find out Igwezu and the presence of his twin brother namely Awuchicke. The latter character does not appear in the play; he is only mentioned in it.

In addition, because of their situation of hopelessness they are gripped by, Igwezu and the Beggar may go together whereas we may also see duality in the following issues read from the play: creation and destruction. In fact, the situation concerns Igwezu. The sequence of the story we refer to is the action of the protagonist of the play, namely Igwezu. In the swamp village, he choses to save himself and his wife, till the land faithfully. So, Igwezu farms the beans and corns. Beyond what is read here, we appreciate the fact of having a space of land to cultivate in the swamp village. As for the second issue that is destruction, we consider the continuation of the story. The problem is that Igwezu does not recover his harvested crops and beans. He discovers with utter disappointment and disbelief that the floods had ruined his farm, and ‘‘the beans and crops had made pottage with mud.’’²⁸⁵

With reference to the play *A Dance of the Forests* already analysed, features read from it are also presented in *The Swamp Dwellers*. We think of destruction and creation. In *A Dance of the Forests* we read that Demoke cuts the tree and creates the totem. He also pulls down Oremole from the tree who dies. And in *The Swamp Dwellers*, we read that Igwezu tills the land. He farms the beans and crops, unfortunately the floods destroy everything in his field. At this level of the work, we may find out the situation of men, that of their proximity to nature, and their duty to command it by negotiation. This situation results in a series of classification of questions:

Igwezu : [...] do I not offer my goats to the priest?
 [...] did he offer them in turn to the serpent?
 And he made it clear – that the offering was from me?
 That I demanded the protection of the heavens on me and my house, on my father and my mother, on my wife, land and chattels? [...] did I not give soil his due? And when the Kadiye bleesed my marriage, and tied the heaven-made knot, did he not promise children? Did he not promise happiness?
 Kadiye: [Does not reply this time] Why are you so fat, Kadiye?²⁸⁶

²⁸⁵ Wole Soyinka, ‘‘The Swamp Dwellers’’ in *Collected Plays 1*, op. cit. p. 101.

²⁸⁶ Ibid., p109.

From this quotation, one may understand that Igwezu's experience shows, the blind dependence on divine assistance leads to more terrible adversity in life. Additionally, this situation from *The Swamp Dwellers* is similar to the one that studs the pages of *A Dance of the Forests* when the human characters invited their forefathers to their celebration of the gathering of tribes. The presence of the glorious ancestors seems useless because at the end, the living characters themselves chase away the Dead Man and the Dead Woman who have been uncertain when they appear in the place chosen for the celebration. They also ask themselves a question if they are expected.

The above situations are lessons people should learn. The choice of forces needed depends on what one is, and the human should not rely on their dead ancestors, and on the Serpent of the swamp, respectively in *A Dance of the Forests* and in *The Swamp Dwellers*.

To analyse *The Road* at this level of the study, we find it better to make clear the fact that, the division and subdivision of the story into parts, the presence or the absence of titles in a literary work help the reading, organise the meanings, and structure the intelligibility of the message.

The style chosen by Wole Soyinka in *The Road* consists of the division of the play into two parts: Part one and Part two. This division corresponds to the succession of events, psychological crisis and tragedy in the play. This style coincides with the choice of theme developed in this play. Some of the issues read in part one are also read in part two. There is seemingly an alternance of entertaining story with violence scenes. The first category of story may refer to the opening mime of part one entitled "fantasy" and the third subdivision of the same part which bears the title of "imitation". As for the scenes of violence we may think of "possession" that is the main theme of the play. The whole action of the play takes place at "a road-side shack". So, we qualify this space as being stable. It may also have a dynamic dimension to the extent that it implies mobility, desire of expansion, progress, but also the possibility of getting lost because of dangerous passages that bring out accidents and destruction. Before this dimension, the road is a physical, real and concrete space around which we find multiple metaphoric and symbolic spaces that reveal social political, psychological, religious and intellectual tensions. These are reflections of an underdeveloped society that seeks progress.

These different kind of tensions justify the end of the play with the possibility of viewing many denouements: Professor is never really possessed, Say Tokyo Kid graps the knife, and plunges it in Professor's back, Professor is rejected, and he becomes insane.

Additionally, this fact coincides with one of the systems for controlling balance in this play, that is to say asymmetry, especially at the level of style, we mean the division and subdivision of the literary work in parts. The reason for this is that Part one covers forty six pages on which we find three subdivisions with page numbers that vary from one subpart to another, and Part two has thirty three. It is subdivided into five subparts with a specific page number for each subdivision. The situation is the same with the number of characters that act out respectively in these parts and subdivisions of the play.

Furthermore, the style chosen by the author can be defined as a two-party style. This fact may have something with the two-words-title of the play phrased as follows: *The Road*.

Above all, the number two is an indication we find very interesting to the extent that it reflects the unity of the action of the play as well as its characters, and its important objects, be them in relation or in opposition.

In *The Road*, characters fall into two groups showing a clear case of symmetry and duality. The protagonist of the play, Professor is in harmony with his followers namely: Kotonu, Salubi, Samson and Murano. In fact, when the play opens, Samson sits on Professor's chair, placed on top of a table in the presence of Salubi, a would-be chauffer, and pretends to be an "African millionaire" flinging bribes to a line of police. Their fantasy is suddenly disrupted by Professor, returning from a road vigil, carrying his usual bundle of newspapers and a road sign newly removed to guarantee his success. Salubi dives under the table in panic, and manages to confuse Professor, who thinks that he has found a kindred spirit. In addition, Salubi with his ambition to become a driver, consultates Professor so that he forges him a driving licence, and Professor promises the forgery of his documents.

As for Samson, he appears to have greater affinity for the word that does Professor, who searches for it on bits of newspapers instead of within the self. In addition, Samson imitates Professor in his former churchgoing days, when during service he would bow at every mention of the name Jesus Christ. This attitude together with his

habit of shaking his head in disapproval and taking notes on the bishop's grammatical errors, help priority in the congregation over the actual sermon.

Furthermore, Samson and Kotonu frantically hide the body of Murano in the back of the truck. Kotonu then deceives the other drivers by donning the mask, which is still soaked with the dead man's blood. Additionally, there are indications in the play that may reveal symmetry at the level of ideas between Professor and Kotonu. In fact, Professor goes to search another word, different from the previous that rejected him and that he rejected. As already said, this situation is the same with Kotonu, driver to Professor. He is victim of road accident which may be physical, psychological and moral. Kotonu and other drivers want to cross the bridge, but unfortunately it breaks in front of them. This experience causes him to abandon the road and become manager of the Aksident Store. This means that he changes his job. The break of the bridge leads Professor to the following reaction that, it is painful thing and will find that out.

One may better understand the friendship or the harmonious relation between Professor and her followers when we precise the fact that Professor is proprietor of drivers' heaven, and formerly Sunday-school teacher and lay-reader; Murano is the personal servant to Professor, Kotonu is driver to Professor, lately of 'No Danger No Delay'²⁸⁷; Samson is the passenger tout and driver's mate to Kotonu; Salubi is Kotonu's driver trainee.

Furthermore, duality is seen in the events about Professor and Bishop who is only mentioned. There is also duality between Professor and Say Tokyo Kid. As for Professor and the Bishop, the key problem is the monopole of power. This means that they have each a respective profession. Professor searches for death that is the word or logos, the inward rational principle of language, consciousness, and the natural universe symbols. He does so by the means of his history. He wants to be the guide of the people's conscience. Professor even despises those he pretends to protect. He is a contradictory character.

In addition, duality between Professor and Bishop results from the facts that, first of all, Professor would bow during church service at every mention of the name Jesus Christ. He Also shakes his head in disapproval and takes notes on the Bishop's grammatical errors. The Bishop in turn says that he has a Bachelor in Divinity, and thinks that he can teach Professor a lesson by using Jesus Christ in every other

²⁸⁷ Wole Soyinka, "The Road" in *Collected Plays I*, op. cit., p. 204.

sentence, prompting him to rise, bow, and sit down. Professor clinched victory by taking and holding one last bow. However, it is true that at the end of the play Professor himself tells us how the palm wine has caused his destitution. He deviates the Good Speech of *The Bible*, and defies the Bishop, repeating his history to the later. This deviation has been the occasion for the Bishop to get rid of Professor.

In addition, events about Professor and Say Tokyo Kid are read in the perspective of opposition and duality. In fact, at the ‘communion’ Murano is forced by Professor to wear the mask, and to dance. Professor bumps into Say Tokyo Kid who is a driver and Captain of Thungs; he does not accept. The play writes:

Say Tokyo Kid: Stop it! [Hitting his gang wilder.] Who you calling boss anyway? I say stop playing along with this sacrilege.
Professor: You make yourself conspicuous. Sit down!²⁸⁸

Then, Say Tokyo Kid grasps the knife as Professor stick hits Salubi hard on the wrist, plunges the knife in Professor’s back.

At the level of important objects, we consider the mask and the wall. These objects are in relation with the whole story of the play. The mask seems to be the condition for possession and death, at its high degree. It is associated with Professor’s followers whom he does not really protect. As for the wall, when it fall, Professor discovers that the road he follows till now is not royal; it is a twisting road marked with constraints. This awareness is expressed in a comic way when Professor speaks to Samson who sits on the table and toys with the idea of a would-be-millionaire. He says, ‘Yes, you seem a knowing man [...] found in denial.’²⁸⁹

Last but not least, the sceneries the church and the cemetery on the one side and the shack and the Aksident Store on the other side suggest the conflict in *The Road*.

One may fairly understand that what we have just written above, that is the issue of religion is an embodiment in Wole Soyinka’s plays under investigation particularly *The Road* with the presence of the Bishop and the church, together with all the actions in close relation; *The Swamp Dwellers*, because of the Serpent of the swamp or the Priest Kadiye, and all the happenings he is concerned with. In addition, the function of conducting the ritual ceremony by Jaguna in this play may have some similarities

²⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 227.

²⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 158.

with actions from *The Strong Breed*. Wole Soyinka's play *The Road* bears some other marks similar with those in *The Strong Breed*. It is the case of the issue of sacrifice.

III-2-2-Symmetry, Dissymmetry and Antisymmetry.

The author of the plays that constitute the corpus of this dissertation keeps on demonstrating that symmetry, dissymmetry and antisymmetry are the major structural elements in *The Strong Breed* which are manifested at the levels of composition and text structure, important objects and ideas, and characters.

At the level of composition and text structure, the author chooses his own style, that of presenting the play as a whole. We mean that the playwright does not divide the play into act, scene and part. To better achieve the objective consisting in a serious analysis of the play, the lack of divisions by Wole Soyinka does not prevent us from dividing the work up into many subdivisions. That is why after proofreading the play we divide it into seven subparts. Among them, the subdivision from pages one hundred and twenty seven to one hundred and thirty two is the centre. It is entitled 'in the house', it has six pages, and four characters act out in this part. It is unique because its characteristics are not seen in the subsections. This subpart is the fourth of the play. The first subdivision and the third one have the same number of pages, that is to say four. The first and second subdivisions have each three characters. The second and the sixth subparts have each seven pages, and three characters play their roles in each part. The fifth and the seventh subdivisions have each five pages and six characters act out in each of these parts. In the first, the second and the sixth subdivisions three characters play their roles. We find this fact interesting because the title of the play is made up of three words: the, strong, breed.

In addition, the third, fifth and sixth subsections have the similarity in the number of characters that play roles in each part. They are six of them in each subdivision. Then it is possible to talk of the numbers three and six at the same time because the first number, three, is half of the second number that is six.

Furthermore, the complex relations between the characters of the play are described as the polyphony of the characters and their voices. The characters of the play fall into groups showing a clear case of symmetry, dissymmetry and antisymmetry.

In fact, Wole Soyinka stops short of creating antinomies, that is to say, two antisymmetrical sides of the phenomenon in *The Strong Breed*. The main character of the play is Eman. He is transposed in his utmost good features to the character of Sunma, who falls in love with him, and in his utmost bad extension to the character of Jaguna, his pursuer. Sunma, Jaguna's daughter performs the function of the guardian angel and devil who according to Orthodox mythology accompany every person throughout his or her life and metaphysically represent the Godly and the Beastly parts of a human being.

Eman appears as if between two mirrors both of which show his potential alter ego. Sunma who is Jaguna's daughter is in love with Eman whose betrothed wife is Omae. The Girl also represents the relationship of personal or individual needs of the demands of ritual... These women form another symmetry group whereby the qualities dissymmetrically reflected are villain versus honest person and successful versus failing both socially and in business. Jaguna is initially a successful romantic honest villain, Omae is an unromantic successful villain pretending to be honest, and Sunma is an unromantic unsuccessful honest person. The Girl continues to believe in scapegoating. She shows no compassion for the abused Eman. She betrays him to Jaguna and Oroge. These qualities, however are not exactly stable and change along the play contributing to its dynamism.

Another symmetry group with Eman as its axis is composed by the male characters of Ifada the fugitive idiot, whom the priest and his attendants have chosen as carrier because he is the only stranger in the village, then replaced by Eman, and the Old Man who is Eman's father. The later helps him to face his responsibility of one of the strong breed, and ends up fulfilling this call of his blood elsewhere.

Many mirror symmetry groups can be found in the play. We may, at last mention Jaguna the priest and mediating character who makes Eman a carrier, and Oroge his assistant. In her life as well as in death, the intended victim, the vicious pawnbroker, is accompanied by her double, the unintended victim.

In addition to the above aspects, we may also view the sacrifice of Eman in the perspective of proportion. In fact Eman, the protagonist of *The Strong Breed* is made the carrier when Jaguna and his collaborators perform the new year ritual in order to heal their society from the sins, disease, and wrongdoing made by the people during

the old year. So, Eman dies for the benefit of the community that receives him as a stranger. Even though Eman's self-sacrifice for strangers fulfils something in him, it seems a waste because the social reintegration sought in the village he dies for fails, because the villagers feel guilty about the violence of the carrier rite. The play affirms that one is what one is, that one cannot escape from his or her blood. To this effect, we may fairly assess that Eman dies for a wrong community to the extent that the ritual ceremony for healing the society at the end of the year is an occasion for the people to kill a person. Another aspect is that, the same occasion of healing their community is also the one during which there is clash among some of the members of the community, and break of taboos.

Furthermore, the use of traditional medicine and the practice of western medicine are also associated with proportion. At this level of analysis we have also the important objects: the effigy and the tree. In fact, Eman operates with Sunma in the clinic before he is killed. The villagers distrust this clinic in which Western medicine is practised, so they try rarely to come for help, preferring the use of traditional medicine. The instance of illustration of the latter kind of treatment is provided by the inscrutable girl who drags a book-like effigy around with her. The effigy, which is tied to one of her legs, is supposed to embody the disease she will be rid of once the carrier has been driven from the village, which is the reason that she dresses it in Eman's clothing.

As for the tree, this important object in *The Strong Breed*, is associated with the death of Eman because the trap that Jaguna sets for him is made of a tree. This fact is of the same sort in *A Dance of the Forests* when Oremole is pulled down from the tree and dies.

III-2-3-Inverted Symmetry.

Inverted symmetry is manifested in *The Lion and the Jewel*. This play is divided into three parts. This style is placed over the course of the day because it is divided into 'Morning',²⁹⁰ 'Noon',²⁹¹ and 'Night'.²⁹² This division into three parts is in

²⁹⁰ Wole Soyinka, 'The Lion and the Jewel' in *Collected Plays 2*, op. cit., p. 3.

²⁹¹ Ibid., p. 19.

²⁹² Ibid., p. 30.

perfect concordance with the whole action of the play. This may also mean that each part of the play corresponds to what happens, and events have similarity with the part of the play during which they take place. There is a clear succession of events in *The Lion and the Jewel*. What happens in the "Morning" continues at "Noon", and ends in the "Evening".

As we can see the action of this play is placed in a line representing a day. These parts are associated with the themes they deal with. In addition, each part may have a double meaning: a literary significance and a metaphoric one. In this respect, the "Morning" as the early part of the day may also mean the beginning of events, the infancy of relationship or the establishment and maintenance of contact between characters; the "Noon" may be the metaphor for manhood, and the "Evening" may metaphorically mean the old age.

When reading *The Lion and the Jewel*, we realize that there is no symmetry at the level of style. The aspect is page number. In fact, the action that takes place in the "Morning" stands on sixteen pages. What happens at "Noon" is read within eleven pages. The action in the "Evening" covers twenty nine pages. It seems very clear that the "Evening" is longer than the "morning", and the "Noon" is shorter than the "Morning". To this effect, the "Morning" is different from the "Evening", and the "Noon" is the axis.

As for the subdivisions of these parts, we mention that the "Morning" and the "Noon" are subdivided into two parts. The "Evening" is subdivided into three subparts. As we can, see the whole work is subdivided into seven parts. At this level of analysis we find it better to consider the number three because the whole play is divided into three parts, and the third part entitled the "Evening" is subdivided into three subparts. Then the number seven of the subdivisions of the play, and three are not divisible by two. They are odd numbers.

Furthermore, *The Lion and the Jewel* can be read in the perspective of proportion that is equality of relationship between two sets of numbers, and a statement that two ratios are equal. The instances of illustration are following: first of all, the second subdivision of the "Morning" which covers three pages and three characters play their roles in this subpart. Secondly, the first subdivisions the "Noon" and the "Evening" cover each six pages, and three characters act out respectively in each subdivision. In addition, the second subdivision the "Noon" is written within six pages. And number

four of the characters acting in this part is the same with those four characters who play their role in the third and last subdivision the ‘‘Evening’’, ending the play. Then, the second subdivision the ‘‘Evening’’ reveals the idea of proportion. In fact, this part covers fifteen pages and three characters play roles in it. We have page numbers which are in proportions with characters number. Three third and six third are in proportions, six third and six third are also in proportions, and three third and fifteen third are in proportions.

Furthermore, we make an attempt to elaborate on the principle of symmetry, especially inverted symmetry that operate in this play. This type of symmetry, that is to say inverted symmetry uses symmetry with one half inverted like a playing cards. We may also consider the word invert, a verb that means put upside down or in the opposite order, position, or arrangement. Indeed, inverted symmetry patterns may be found in *The Lion and the Jewel*. It is through the levels of text structure and characters that we make this interpretation.

In fact, the plan of the events of the story in *The Lion and the Jewel* involves a deliberate inversion of one of the most constant motifs of romantic comedy: a love triangle in which the romance of the pair of young lovers is for a while frustrated by another, often wealthier suitor; but the younger suitor ultimately prevails and the young lovers marry. In this play, it is the older suitor Baroka whose suit prevails and who shows for greater vitality and resourcefulness than the young, hapless competitor. This inversion, in which age prevails over youth, entails other important details as well: the protagonist is a teacher; he proves more enterprising than the antagonist, a villager who proves more cultured, more enlightened than the would-be sophisticate.

The Lion and the Jewel is the triangular play between Baroka, Sidi and Lakunle. Baroka’s vitality assures his eventual triumph over Sidi and Lakunle. As can be seen, the author has taken care to invert greater dramatic interest in the other two characters as well. *The Lion and the Jewel* is a play of conflict and opposition. It is constantly shifting and moves from Lakunle and Sidi to Lakunle and Baroka and finally to Baroka and Sidi. It is obvious that each of these characters is acting either as protagonist or antagonist in the shifting of conflict in the play.

These aspects of inverted symmetry may be illustrated with events in the play as follows: first of all the love triangle is associated with Lakunle, Sidi and Baroka. Sidi has two suitors, namely: Lakunle and Baroka.

To begin with Lakunle, he is actually the first with their intention to marry Sidi. Lakunle is a young, idealistic schoolteacher. In the first part of this play, the ‘‘Morning’’, he expresses his undying love for Sidi, and asks her to marry him. He takes her in many ways. But she seems unprepared to give up the power that comes with being a beautiful, young, semi-famous maiden in a small village. Lakunle pleads with her, proposing a modernistic wedding package that includes love, respect, companionship and perhaps monogamy. The relationship between Lakunle and Sidi is clarified when she claims for a bride-price. This fact does not mean that Sidi lacks affection for Lakunle. She insists on the tradition which will prove her value in the eyes of the village. Before the inversion there are conflict and opposition between Lakunle and Baroka, the two suitors of Sidi. This happens before Baroka addresses Sidi at the end of the first part of the play, that is the ‘‘Morning’’.

In fact, Baroka gives Lakunle the traditional greeting, and he is displeased to get a European one in return. Far from being displeased by the dance, he insists on it being continued. He tells Lakunle ‘‘you tried to steal our village maidenhead’’²⁹³. He continues:

Well, the play was much alive until I came.
And now everything stops, and you were leaving
Us . After all, I knew the story and I came in
Right on cue. It makes me feel as if I was Chief
Baseji.²⁹⁴

As can be seen, Baroka is the second suitor of Sidi. He is an old man. The events about Baroka and Sidi take place in the third and last part of the play, the ‘‘Night’’. However, earlier at the end of the first part the ‘‘Morning’’, Baroka in the presence of Lakunle and Sidi of course, brings out his copy of the magazine and admires the heroine of the publication. He says ‘‘ yes, yes... it is five full months since last I took a wife...five full months...’’²⁹⁵

In addition when the ‘‘Noon’’ opens, Sadiku who is Baroka’s oldest wife addresses Sidi telling that the Lion, Baroka wants her for a wife. Lakunle protests in

²⁹³ Ibid., p17.

²⁹⁴ Ibid., p16.

²⁹⁵ Ibid., p18.

vain because Sidi herself tells him to be quiet. Sadiku adds that Sidi will be Baroka's own jewel. To this, Sidi seemingly agrees when she says 'Sadiku, let him be. Tell your lord that I can read his mind.'²⁹⁶

The essential fact of the last part of the play, that is the 'Night', is devoted to the actions of Baroka and Sidi. It is at this level that the play ends with a happy resolution which does not prove ambiguous to the extent that Sidi accepts Baroka's invitation. Before the scene of Baroka and Sidi in Baroka's bedroom, Lakunle at the end of the previous one with a very long speech of thirty eight lines which sounds like a monologue of sorry, he says to Sadiku:

[...] You spend your days as Senior wife,
Collecting brides for Baroka.
And now because you've sucked him dry,
You send my Sidi to his shame...²⁹⁷

Then Sidi enters nearly backwards as she is still busy admiring the room through which he has just passed. She makes clear that she has been invited. She says: 'I only hope that I am at the Bale invitation'²⁹⁸ Baroka replies: '[...] Come, come, my child. You too quick to feel aggrieved. Of course you are more than welcome.'²⁹⁹

In addition, the unambiguous happy resolution is achieved through the following roles and actions:

Baroka: the old must flow into the new, Sidi [...]
A girl like you must inherit
Miracles which age alone reveals.
Is this not so ?
Sidi: Everything you say, Bale,
Seems wise to me.
Baroka: Yesterday's wine alone is strong and blooded, child,
And through the christians' holy book denies
The truth of this, old wine thrives best
Within a new bottle. [...]
Is it not so - my child ?
[quite overcome, Sidi nods.]
Baroka: Those who know little of Baroka think
His life one pleasure – living course.
But the monkey sweats, my child,
The monkey sweats,
It is only the hair upon his back

²⁹⁶ Ibid., p21.

²⁹⁷ Ibid., p35.

²⁹⁸ Ibid., p37.

²⁹⁹ Ibid., p37.

Which still deceives the world ...

[Sidi's head falls on the Bale's shoulder-The Bale remains in his final body-weighted-down – by – of - State attitude.³⁰⁰

From the quoted passage from the play, one may fairly understand that Sidi lost his virginity on Baroka's bedroom. That is the essence of the so-called unambiguous happy resolution at the end of the play *The Lion and the Jewel*.

Furthermore, the author of this play demonstrates symmetry at the level of characters. In fact, Baroka is transported in his utmost good features to the character of Sadiku. To be clear, Sadiku is Baroka's primary wife. One of his principal jobs is to win younger wives for Baroka. She convinces Sidi that the young woman should marry Baroka by telling her that the latter is old and that Sidi will have the honour of being the new wife of Baroka.

III-2-4-Near Symmetry, Dissymmetry and Opposition.

As *A Dance of the Forests* and *The Road, Kongi's Harvest* is also divided into two parts: First Part and Second Part. The particularity of this play, *Kongi's Harvest* is that, it opens with the 'Hemlock'³⁰¹, and it ends with the 'Hangover'³⁰². Through this style chosen by the author himself, he organizes the unity of all the elements in the play with the objective of dealing with the same basic theme of the abuse of power, this, by the way of great variation in technique, idiom and tone. And, this theme of corruption of power associated with reactionary violence is practised by the means of the sub-themes such as 'protest', 'propaganda', 'hypocrisy', 'spying', 'treason', etc.

In addition, it is clearly evident that the form of the festival theatre has been retained in *Kongi's Harvest*. The shuttle back and forth of the scenes which shift from one location to another in quick succession are in line with the layout of loves in the grandstand of the Harvest scene in *Kongi's Harvest* includes the 'Hemlock' section, followed by the 'First Part', and then the 'Second Part' which in turn is followed by the 'Hangover', that is the final scene of the play. The provision of such scenes as

³⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 49.

³⁰¹ Wole Soyinka, 'Kongi's Harvest' in *Collected Plays 2*, op. cit., p. 61.

³⁰² Ibid., p. 133.

‘Hemlock’ and ‘Hangover’ may seem to relate to the conventional prologue and epilogue of classical Greek tragedy, yet, here they embody a new aesthetics which is significantly African.

Furthermore, Wole Soyinka in *Kongi’s Harvest* keeps on demonstrating the fact that symmetry, balance in its types of near symmetry, dissymmetry and opposition are the major structural elements in this play which are manifested at the levels of the general style of the play to the extent that the author divides the play *Kongi’s Harvest* into two parts: ‘First Part’³⁰³ which preceded by the ‘Hemlock’ and ‘Second Part’³⁰⁴, followed by the ‘Hangover’. These two parts reveal a good relationship to the extent that the ‘Second Part’ is the continuation of the ‘First Part’. The illustration of this is that the search for the image for their lord who is the protagonist of the play in the ‘First Part’ leads to the repressiveness of the antagonist of the play in the ‘Second Part’. As for the ‘Hemlock’, the clash manifested in it has a relation with the treason read throughout the ‘Hangover’. In addition, the division of the play ‘*Kongi’s Harvest*’ reveals balance in its type of near symmetry at the level of page number. In fact, the ‘First Part’ covers thirty one pages whereas the ‘Second Part’ is written within thirty two pages.

As we can see the difference between these two parts is of one page. This situation is also observed in the subdivisions of these two parts. First of all, we subdivide the ‘First Part’ into five sub-parts or acts when we refer to classical plays; the ‘Second Part’ is subdivided into four parts. Within the subdivisions, the first one of the ‘Second Part’ covers seven pages, and the second subdivision of the same part has eight pages. Then, the fifth subdivision of the ‘First Part’ covers nine pages whereas the second subdivision of the ‘Second Part’ has eight pages. As for the number of characters who play their roles, we discover five of them in the first subdivision of the ‘First Part’ whereas there are four characters in the fifth subdivision of this part. Those four characters in the last subdivision of the ‘First Part’ are placed side by side with the three characters who act out in the second subdivision of the ‘First Part’.

In addition, both pure symmetry and proportion can be seen within the subdivisions, whether at the level of page numbers or of the number of characters. In

³⁰³ Ibid., p. 70.

³⁰⁴ Ibid., p101.

fact, the first and the third subdivisions of the 'First Part' cover three pages each. Then, the second subdivision of the 'First Part' and the fourth sub-part of the 'Second Part' cover five pages each. As for the number of characters who play roles in these subdivisions, we find out six characters acting out respectively in the second and the fourth subdivisions of the 'Second Part'. In the fifth subdivision of the 'First Part' and the first subdivision of the 'Second Part', there are four characters who play their roles.

In addition, there are parts in *Kongi's Harvest* that reveal the idea of proportions as far as page number and the number of characters that act out are concerned. The illustrations of these are first of all, the 'Hemlock' which covers nine pages, and six characters play roles in it is in proportions with the 'Hangover' to the extent that this final scene covers six pages, and three characters play their roles in this part. Here nine sixth and six third are in proportions. Then, five third of page number and character number in the first subdivision of 'First Part' are in proportions with five third of page number and character number in the second subdivision of the same part. At last, these two subdivisions of five third are in proportions with the fourth subdivision of this 'First Part' because of fifteen and twelve as page numbers. So, fifteen twelfth and five third are in proportions.

Furthermore, as in *The Strong Breed*, characters in *Kongi's Harvest* fall into groups showing a clear case of symmetry in their ideas, and opposition in their relations. In fact, the main character of the play is Kongi. He is transported in his utmost good features to the characters of Superintendent, Organizing Secretary, Aweris, Captain of the Carpenter's Brigade, etc.

Superintendent and Carpenters Brigade perform the function of those who establish the instruments of coercion intended to tyrannize over Oba Danlola. The repression that he undergoes is a constant source of concern for Oba Danlola as it is evident in his speech here:

Their yam is pounded, not with the pestles
But with stamp and a pad of violet ink
And their arms make omelet of
Sturbborn heads, via police truncheons.³⁰⁵

And this is confirmed in the words of their anthem:

³⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 109.

We spread the creed of Kongism
 To every son and daughter
 And heads too slow to learn it
 Will feel our mallets' weight.³⁰⁶

The members of the Reformed Fraternity in their turn work as the instruments of intellectual and spiritual repression. They prevent the people from their freedom of mind to see things in the administration's way. The illustration of this is the address read in the 'Hemlock' section of the play:

Who but a lunatic
 Will bandy words with boxes
 With government rediffusion set
 Which talk and never
 Take a lone word in reply.³⁰⁷

In addition, the Aweris fulfil also the role of Kongi's body advisers. They work for public relations to enhance the image of their Leader. They speak of Kongi's vision of harmony, and of the need to 'replace the old superstitious festival, by a state ceremony governed by the principle of Enlightened Ritualism'.³⁰⁸ This may also mean that the Aweris decide to project a more modern style for Kongi, as opposed to the old ways of traditional leadership.

Then, at the Reformed session, the Aweris deificate Kongi. As a result, he likens himself to Christ, and he wants his name along with the forthcoming harvest festival to mark the beginning of a new calendar with everything else dating from it. We illustrate this situation with the following passage from the play, *Kongi's Harvest*:

For Kongi is our father
 And Kongi is our man
 Kongi is our mother
 Kongi is our man
 And Kongi is our Saviour
 Redeemer, prince of power
 For isms and for Kongi

³⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 115.

³⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 61.

³⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 81.

We're proud to live or to die.³⁰⁹

In addition to the above mentioned characters in Kongi's group we take with them the Organizing Secretary to Kongi. He is often flanked by his own intelligence service that is 'the Right and the Left of State who keep the country non – aligned'.³¹⁰

Before revealing this situation, the Organizing Secretary tells Daodu that Oba Danlola, his uncle suffers; he is going to die tragically in his hands. And he, the Organizing Secretary is against both of them. That is the essence of the following passage from the play.

Secretary [with abrupt violence]: Your uncle is a pain in the neck.

Daodu: Who?

Secretary: Your uncle. You are Daodu aren't you? Son of Sarumi by his wife number six. And Oba Danlola is your uncle and you the heir- apparent to his throne. And I have come to tell you that your uncle is damned stubborn goat, an obstructive, cankerous creature and a bloody pain in my neck.³¹¹

He continues his talk when he tells the Aweris the desires of Kongi.

Secretary: Gentlemen, please. All we want is some way of persuading King Danlola to bring the New Yam to Kongi with his own hands. I have organized the rest- the agriculture show to select the prize-winning yam, the feast, the bazaar, the music, the dance. Only one thing is missing—Oba Danlola. And gentlemen, that problem is yours. Kongi desires that the king performs all his customary spiritual functions, only this time, that he performs them to him, our Leader. Kongi must preside as the Spirit of Harvest, in pursuance of the Five-Year Development Plan.³¹²

This address of Organizing Secretary to Daodu and to Aweris proves that he actually works for kongism. In addition, Kongi's question and instruction or order are also helpful to understand very well this situation. He says: 'Do they have all the facts?' And he adds 'Do it now. There is little time left.'³¹³

From what has been mentioned, one may fairly understand that Kongi and his followers together are against Oba Danlola. To this respect, Wole Soyinka in this play actually demonstrates opposition between two groups: that of Kongi against Oba

³⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 116.

³¹⁰ Ibid., p72.

³¹¹ Ibid., p72.

³¹² Ibid., p77.

³¹³ Ibid., p76.

Danlola. In other words, the central conflict of the play ranges those with Kongi against the dissidents who are opposed to him. Those who are ranged in various more or less defined sorts of opposition to Kongi represent a group of at least three characters. First of all, we mention Oba Danlola, an old traditional leader.

When the play opens he is in detention, certainly for opposition to Kongi. To this effect, one of the important actions of the play is concerned with the desire of bringing Danlola to present Kongi with the new yam, to renounce in effect his traditional authority. Then, apparently, Daodu who is Danlola's nephew and heir is also ranged against Kongi and his political policy that is 'isms'. The reason for this is that we see Daodu do precious little. He is a bar fly, a habitué of Segi's Night Club, and Segi's present lover. Segi is Kongi's former mistress. This is quite evident because the Organizing Secretary makes it clear when he says to Segi 'Kongi's mystery woman. You couldn't be anybody else.'³¹⁴

Last but not least, Segi may also be found in opposition with Kongi. She never acts unambiguously in such a way as to disprove the persistent story that she destroys men.

At this level of analysis, we find it better to make clear the fact that the relation of Segi and Daodu is not well defined. The problem is that she is between Kongi, his former lover, and Daodu his present lover. Segi agrees on the way the Organizing Secretary defines his relation with Kongi, that she is her 'mystery woman'. And, when she is with Daodu, she seems to love everybody. She addresses Daodu as follows: 'come through the gates tonight. Now. I want you in me, my Spirit of Harvest.'³¹⁵ In the forthcoming utterance, she continues her address to Daodu as she says 'I must rejoice, and you with me; I am opened tonight. I am soil from the final rains.'³¹⁶

In addition, Segi herself tells Daodu that 'Kongi was a great man, and she loved him'³¹⁷. This love story between Kongi, Segi and Daodu from *Kongi's Harvest* is similar to that of Lakunle, Sidi and Baroka in *The Lion and the Jewel*. In *A Dance of the Forests*³¹⁸ we read a love story of the same kind; it is concerned with Mata

³¹⁴ Ibid., p96.

³¹⁵ Ibid., p98.

³¹⁶ Ibid., p98.

³¹⁷ Ibid., p. 99

³¹⁸ Wole Soyinka, 'A Dance of the Forests' in *Collected Plays I*, op. cit., p. 181.

Kharibu, Madame Tortoise, Dead Man and Dead Woman in their previous existence, and Demoke, Rola and Adenebi in their present existence.

Reading through the play *Kongi's Harvest* helps us understand that this play ends with a mimed and spectacular denouement. This seems very clear because Kongi's best intentions devolve into a bloodless victory. In addition, it is Oba Danlola that ends the whole play before the last stage direction which writes that Danlola 'starts briskly back in the opposite direction' to the one take by the Organizing Secretary who leaves before him.

Furthermore, Kongi believes that he obtains the monopoly of power from the hands of dismissed spiritual chief Oba Danlola during the ritual festival that consists in the presentation of the new yam, but he must be happy to harvest the decapitated head of Oba Danlola in the pan. This fact is the result of Kongism, his regime. He could exclaim 'My humble quota to the harvest of the road'³¹⁹. So does Kotonu in *The Road* when he sees his victim.

In addition, Kongism presents to the readers other realities and manifestations of *The Road*.

In fact, when Oba Danlola wants to hold on his passed splendid happy day, he gets indignant at the spectre that is presented to him. He compares it to a road sign of fortune at the crossroads. Danlola asks:

Do you dare call this a spectre?
This dung-stained goat prod, this
Makeshift sign at crossroads, this
Thighbone of the crow that died
Of rickets?³²⁰

This image may express the refusal of change that consists in the loss of his traditional power for the benefit of Kongi. We also find Oba Danlola in the situation of what to do. Strangely, when in *The Road*, Professor comes on stage for the first time, he turns off jealously a road sign on which it is written 'Bend'³²¹. The other aspect is that the way Professor dresses resembles to a laic preacher and Sunday school teacher's dress

³¹⁹ Wole Soyinka, "Kongi's Harvest" in *Collected Plays 2*, op. cit., p. 181.

³²⁰ Ibid., p. 101.

³²¹ Wole Soyinka, "The Road" in *Collected Plays 1*, op. cit., p157.

style. It is similar to Jeroboam's dress style. In addition, the theme of death we find out in *Kongi's Harvest* is also read in *The Road*, and in *The Strong Breed*.

Wole Soyinka is the playwright who has such a freedom as he structures his plays in a manner which he finds better. *A Dance of the Forests*, *The Road* and *Kongi's Harvest* are divided into two parts each. *The Swamp Dwellers* and *The strong Breed* are played as a whole. *The Lion and the Jewel* is divided into three parts.

III-2-5-Duality, Dissymmetry and Symmetry.

The Trials of Brother Jero is structured or styled as a five - scenes play, that is to say, it is divided into five scenes. As we can see, the play *The Trials of Brother Jero* is the only play that is associated with the classical division of plays in our corpus. And to raise the equivoque, this play in five scenes is not divided into acts. We find it better to elaborate a bit more on the two words at this level of our study. Those words are: act and scene.

In fact, the Roman theatre is the first to divide plays into a number of acts separated by intervals. Acts may be further divided into scenes; in classical theatre each regrouping between entrances and exits of actors is a scene, while later use describes a change of setting. Modern plays often have only one level of structure, which can be referred to as either scenes or acts at the whim of the writers. Successive scenes are normally separated from each other in either time or place; but the division between acts is more to do with the overall dramatic structure of the place.

As can be understood, an act is a division or unit of a drama. This may also mean a main division of a play. The number of acts in the production can range from one to five, depending on how a writer structures the outline of the story. As for the word scene, it is the part shorter than an act into which some plays are divided.

From what is written above, we demonstrate that to some extent, it is possible to use the words 'act' and 'scene' interchangeably. So, when *The Trials of Brother Jero* is divided only in scenes, we may also consider these scenes as acts. In addition, the presence of acts results in the use of scenes. However the absence of acts justifies their interchangeability with scenes. To this respect, in *The Trials of Brother Jero* acts are also scenes.

This play again, is one of the shortest play of Wole Soyinka because it covers only twenty nine pages. This literary work is a comedy of sort. And, the division of this play into five scenes or acts makes it a usually dismissed as a rather conventional comedy.

The protagonist of this play is Jeroboam. He is a beach prophet who makes his way by prophesying the futures of other working class people in the vicinity. In addition, *The Trials of Brother Jero* adheres to the unities of time, that is one rather eventful day in Jeroboam's life, and place is the beach. This style also corresponds to the succession of events; that is to say, it coincides with the choice of the central theme developed in this play. It is in this respect that we find out some similarities mainly in the ways the play *The Trials of Brother Jero* is structurally held together.

In fact, three scenes in this play begin with Jeroboam addressing directly the audience, telling about himself. Those scenes are: scene I, scene III and scene V. The play opens by scene I with Jeroboam who makes us learn that he is 'A prophet by birth and by inclination'³²² and has worked his way up against a lot competition from others in his field as well as diversions which keep his 'wealthier patrons at home.' Then, scene III similarly begins with Jeroboam as he says 'I don't know how she found out my house. When I brought the goods off her, she did not even ask any questions. My calling was enough to guarantee payment.'³²³ After, scene V follows the same beginning when Jeroboam speaks to us telling 'I could teach him a trick or two about speech-making. He's a member of the Federal House, a back-bencher but with one eye on a ministerial post.'³²⁴

What we have just written shows that scenes I, III and V actually begin in a similar fashion with Jeroboam addressing us confiding in us secrets of his profession. This relationship of Jeroboam to us is central to the analysis of this comedy, and we will continually return to it as we examine this play more closely. In addition, similarities observed in the beginning of the three scenes mentioned above also work in the number of pages of some scenes as well as the number of characters who play role.

³²² Wole Soyinka, 'The Trials of Brother Jero' in *Collected Plays 2*, op. cit., p145.

³²³ Ibid., p. 152.

³²⁴ Ibid., p168.

In fact, scene I covers three pages and three characters act out in this scene. Here, number 'three' draws our attention to the extent that the whole play is also divided into three scenes. The two last scenes, these are scene IV and scene V cover five pages each, and three characters play their roles respectively in each of these scenes.

As we can see, the issue of proportion works better in this play because of the three third in scene I, then five third and five third are in proportions. We may also add the observation that the numbers three and five which dominate the play are random because we qualify them as odd numbers that reflect the reality of, first of all, the noun phrase that is used as the title of the play, *The Trials of Brother Jero*, made up of five words. Then, the prevailing of odd numbers may bear the ideas of not-fixed-minded-character that is also the attitude of changing ideas not for the better. This is quite evident in this play because in it, Wole Soyinka demonstrates that duality, dissymmetry and symmetry are the major structural elements in *The Trials of Brother Jero*, which are manifested at the levels of characters, important objects and ideas, composition and text structure.

In fact, we talk of symmetry because we see the characters walking in pair. The instances of illustrations are Jeroboam and the Old Prophet who is his mentor first of all; then, the couple of Chume and Amope whose names are made up of five letters; next, we have a women pair that comprises Amope and Trader with dissymmetry in their relations. We must precise the fact that symmetry works here at the surface level of characters' relationships only because Jeroboam is the grown up disciple, and Old Prophet is the mentor, and as a consequence we find it better to put them together. Then, Chume is the husband and Amope the wife. So, they are a couple that must also be considered at this step of analysis. But, at the level of important ideas, that is to say the characters' actions and thought, duality is the major structural element. There are duals between Jeroboam and the Old Prophet, Chume and Amope, and between Amope and Trader.

In fact to begin with the dual between Jeroboam and Old Prophet, the issue at stake is associated with the hard situation of prophets who quarrel on the places where they conduct their church service that consists in prophesying falsely the people's futures for their own benefits. As it seems clear, the problem is placed between the end of Jeroboam's own activities of prophecy. In clear, Jeroboam the disciple forces Old Prophet to abandon that work, as a way for him to begin the ministry. So, Jeroboam

evicts Old Prophet, who in turn appears briefly shouting out curse on Jeroboam. Old Prophet uses ‘the Daughters of Discord’ to avenge him for his forced-downfall in the prophecy service. This dual happens in scene I when the play opens:

Jeroboam: [...] the beach has become fashionable, and the struggle for land has turned the profession into a thing of ridicule. Some prophet I could name gained their present beaches by getting women penitents to shake their bosoms in spirituals ecstasy. [...] My Master, the same one who brought me up in prophetic ways staked his claim and won a grant of land... I helped him with a campaign let by six dancing girls from the French territory all dressed as Jehovah’s Witnesses. What my old Master did not realize was that I was really helping myself. [...] They all prefer High Life to the rhythm of celestial hymns. [...] I thought for a moment that the curse of my old Master was about to be fulfilled. It shouk me quite a bit, but...the Lords protects his own...[Enter Old Prophet shaking his fist.]

Old Prophet: Ungrateful Wretch! Is this how you repay the long years of training I have given you? To drive me, your old Tutor, off my piece of land... telling me I have lived beyond my time. Ha! May you be rewarded in the same manner. May the wheel come right round and find you just as helpless as you make me now...[He continues to mouth curses, but inaudibly.]

Jeroboam: [ignoring him.]: He didn’t move me bit. The old dodderer has been foolish enough to imagine that I organized the campaign to acquire his land in competition...

Old Prophet : Ingrate! Monster! I curse you with the curse of the Daughters of Discord. May they be your downfall. May the Daughters of Eve bring ruin down on your head!³²⁵

The above passage from the play actually demonstrates the dual between Jeroboam and the Old Prophet. In addition, it is also the beginning of the trials of Jeroboam. In other words, the dual between Jeroboam and Old Prophet is the first trial of Jeroboam in his day life as a prophet and brother. Then, the following assessment seems also interesting, that is, Jeroboam overcomes all the trials he undergoes in the play.

Next, there is another dual between Amope and Chume, Amope and Trader, Jeroboam and Chume. The actions in relation with each dual are read in different scenes. So, there is a sort of continuation of events from one to another. In addition, when Wole Soyinka demonstrates duality at the level of the characters’ relationships, we notice that, here, duality is reinforced by inversion which is one of the types of balance. In other words, there are parts in this play where the actions of the characters shows inversion in the relationships of the characters in the play, among them: Amope and Chume, Amope and Trader, Jeroboam and Chume. To make things clear, inversion that is also inverted symmetry means the ‘instance of something that is put upside

³²⁵ Ibid., pp145-146.

down or in the opposite order, position, or arrangement'; it is also the 'type of balance which uses symmetry with one half inverted like a playing card.'

To begin with Amope and Chume, duality and inversion are manifested at the level of their relationships in scene I and in scene IV. In fact, scene II presents Amope and Chume in front of Jeroboam's house so that Amope gets the pay from Jeroboam for the white velvet cape she sold him. When they arrive at Jeroboam's house again, Chume ignores whose house his wife is waiting for. To this effect, Amope tells him 'Stop here, stop here. That's his house'³²⁶ and Chume replies 'You didn't give me much notice. I had to brake suddenly.'³²⁷

Then, the fact that Chume brakes his bicycle suddenly causes some pain to Amope, who in turn reacts ' [...] you could set me down a little more gently.'³²⁸ This stage direction bears an indication of Amope's attitude as to what happens to her: [She sits down near the door of the hut, sighing heavenly and begins to nurse her feet.]³²⁹

One may fairly understand that Chume's sudden break of his bicycle wounds Amope. After that, Chume wants to bandage the wound for her, but she refuses. Despite her feeling, Amope can look after herself. She has always looked after Chume too. He in turn asks her with some show of exasperation if she sees oil on the wrapper. Amope replies 'abuse me. All right, go on begin to abuse me.'³³⁰

In addition, scene II also presents another aspect of duality. It is the dual turning between Amope and Jeroboam after she has resisted Chume who wanted to take her to their house probably. Amope and Jeroboam are sister and brother in Christ. The essence of this dual is in the passage below, from the play:

Jero: [...] I hope you have not come to stand in the way of Christ and his work.
Amope: If Christ doesn't stand in the way of me and my work.
Jero: Beware of pride, sister. That was a sinful way to talk.
Amope: Listen, you bearded debtor. You owe me one pound, eight and nine. You promised again would pay me three months ago but of course you have been too busy doing the work of God. Well, let me tell you are not going the anywhere until you do a bit of my work.

³²⁶ Ibid., p147.

³²⁷ Ibid., p147.

³²⁸ Ibid., p147.

³²⁹ Ibid., p148.

³³⁰ Ibid., p148.

Jero: But the money is not in the house. I must get it from the post office before I can pay you. [...] Brother Jeroboam shuts the door...]³³¹

From this extract one may understand that Amope is an aggressive female character. This attitude and behaviour are also manifested to Trader who is present in the play. If with the two first duals of Amope and Chume, Amope and Jeroboam the reason why Amope behaves such a way is well known, that is his debt, however, with Trader she has no reason to insult her. To this effect, we see Amope in the attitude of extreme aggressivity.

We make it clear through the following questions by Amope to Trader: 'Ei, what are you selling? Isn't it you I'm calling? What have you got there? [...] isn't it money I'm going to pay you? It is last week's, isn't it? Well does it smell a bit, doesn't it?'³³²

To the last question, Trader in turn replies 'Maybe it is you who haven't had a bath for a week.'³³³

This sort of dialectic of insult leads Amope to say 'Yeh! All right, go on. Abuse me when all I wanted was a few of you miserable fish.'³³⁴ In front of such character, Trader was afraid and very sorry. She tells her 'It is early in the morning. I am not going to let you infect my luck with your foul tongue by answering you back.'³³⁵

In addition, scene IV seems actually the continuation of scene II. To this effect, duality between Amope and Chume still stands as they are in front of Jeroboam's home later that day. The other side of the cause of the dual is that Chume wants Amope to pack her things because they are going home. Unfortunately, Amope resists, saying that she is not budging from Jeroboam's house till she gets her money. Then, Chume advances on her and tells her to get on the bike. But Amope refuses, and asks him to kill her. As a consequence, Chume suddenly decides he may beat his wife; but the Prophet cured him.

³³¹ Ibid., p151.

³³² Ibid., pp. 150-1

³³³ Ibid., p. 151.

³³⁴ Ibid., p151.

³³⁵ Ibid., p151.

III-3-DRAMATIC EFFECTS.

To better understand the so – called dramatic effects, they are relative plays; they give that feeling of drama, suspense, and mystery; the mood/ feeling/ atmosphere of excitement. We could consider them as synonymous with ‘theatrical devices’ that we may need to clarify right at the beginning of this section. Theatrical devices may be defined as the signs that orient drama as a literary text to drama as a literary genre realized in performance, that is also to say drama as a literary form designed for the theatre. What we have just written may also mean that a literary text bears in it the symbols and signs that are helpful for the performance on stage. These aspects actually define drama as a unique literary genre because of the existence of a play that is a literary written work, and the possibility to present the same written text of drama to an audience on stage.

In addition, the phrase theatrical devices may be synonymous with dramatic extra- devices. The latter phrase completes the understanding of the first one. In this respect, it seems now clear that a dramatic text offers more elements, even beyond those designed to the reading. The symbols and signs that tell theatre in drama may be listed as follows: physical actions including movements, gestures and facial expressions, and sound effects, music and dance. We may also add that, through the language of their bodies, characters in drama reveal their attitudes, feelings and meanings to other characters, and those other characters in turn reveal their feelings and meanings to them.

In addition, they understand more about the other characters’ feelings and meanings who in turn understand more about theirs. This helps them become better able to refine and improve what the parts of their bodies say about themselves, which generates a positive improvement in the way they feel, the way they perform, and what they achieve.

Furthermore, the analysis of dramatic extra-devices in the seven plays by Wole Soyinka that constitute the corpus of this dissertation involves the description of the theatrical devices around the text, that is to say we need to know the category of each sign as well as the various purposes the dramatic extra-devices are used for.

In addition, the attentive reading and imagined observation of theatrical devices in the plays under scrutiny allows us to understand that signs which tell theatre in

drama are relative to age and gender first of all, then a sign by one character in a certain situation can carry far more, or very little meaning compare to the same sign used by a different character in the same situation. And it is not excluded the existence of characters in the same situation that use the same theatrical devices. So, when assessing dramatic extra-devices especially the strength of signs category, purposes and meaning in the plays under scrutiny, we find it better to do so in relative terms, considering the characters and the situation involved. This is an additional reason to avoid superficial analysis based on isolated theatrical devices from the text, and to seek as many indicators as possible, especially subtle clues when suspecting that things might not be what they seem.

We may speak in terms of isolation which can work in this analysis because of the diversity of categories of dramatic extra-devices in the plays under analysis, that those of the same kind, and from the same or not will be analysed in the same section. As it appears clear, the methodology of analysis chosen for this section consists in describing the signs of the same kind from the same and different plays, regrouped together with regard to the similar situation of the characters, be they from the same play or not. We also attempt to interpret the purposes and meanings of those dramatic extra-devices.

In the section devoted to the description and analysis a theatrical device of some kind, the restriction of dramatic extra devices of other kind that occur or co-occur in the same entrance or stage direction in the play will also be described and analysed briefly. The reason for this is that, when theatrical devices of different kinds occur or co-occur around the same text, they reinforce the theme or the sub-theme that the text deals with. To this effect, what we have just said may mean theatrical devices such as passing, laughing, shaking head, looking at each other etc., occurring or co-occurring in the text may have the same meaning as they are read around the same situation in the text. In addition, dramatic extra devices of the same category with those already described and analysed will be studied again when they occur or co-occur in any given situation in the same play or another literary work under investigation.

III-3-1-Physical Actions.

The need to clarify what this section is about brings us to give a possible definition of the phrase which constitutes the title of this sub-section: 'physical action'. In fact, the first word in it is physical. It is an adjective which means bodily or of the body. The second word is 'action', a common noun defined as the process of doing things bodily. Additionally, in the context of drama physical actions refer to the movements that the characters do in the play. They are visible and may or may not involve dialogue. Physical actions are read and seen in the form of movements, gestures, mime or pantomime. This means that physical actions are synonymous with drama movements in the extent that they include the steps taken by the character while he/she is speaking, or in the process of undertaking other tasks. These are explained and illustrated in details below. Movements are used to describe mainly the actual movements like walking, running, pacing, kneeling, lying down, standing or sitting, etc. In this respect one may consider movements simply as the process of moving, change of place, position, or passing from one place to another.

In Wole Soyinka's plays under scrutiny there are pages on which we read that characters are moving, as we can imagine them moving on the stage the time the plays are performed. In *A Dance of the Forests* the illustrations are the following:

An empty clearing in the forest. Suddenly the soil appears to be breaking and the head of the Dead Woman pushes its way up. Some distance from her, another head begins to appear, that of a Dead Woman. They both come up slowly. The man is fat and bloated, wears a dated warrior's outfit, now mouldy. The woman is pregnant. They come up, appear to listen. They do not seem to see each other. Shortly after, Adenebi enters. He passes close to the Dead Man.

Dead Man: Will you take my case, sir?

[Adenebi stares, and runs off.]

Dead Man [shaking his head.]: I thought we were expected.

[They both seem to attempt to sense their surroundings.]

Dead Woman: This is the place.

Dead Woman: ...Unless of course I came up too soon. It is long time and such a long way.

Dead Woman: No one to meet me. I know this is the place.

[Obaneji enters, passes close by the Woman.]

Dead Woman: Will you take my case?

[Obaneji stops and looks thoughtfully at them. The Dead Man, listening hard, goes quickly towards him. Obaneji withdraws, looking back at the Pair.]

Dead Woman: I thought he might. He considered it long enough.

[Demoke enters. He is tearing along.]

Dead Woman: Will you take my case?

Demoke [stops.]: Can't you see? I am in a hurry.

Dead Woman: But you stopped. Will you not take my

case?

Demoke: When you see a man hurrying, he has got a load on his back. Do you think I live empty that I will take another's cause for pay or mercy?

Dead Woman: And yet we'll meet there.

Demoke: You say you know. I am merely on my business.

[Going.]

Dead Woman: Stop. I lived here once.

[Goes. The Dead Woman shakes her head sadly.

Rola enters swinging her hips.]

Dead Man: Madame please, will you take my case?

Rola: Even before you ask it.

Dead Man [gladly.]: Will you?

Rola[Who has gone nearer him.]: Oh! [She backs away.]

What is the matter with you!

Dead Man : Don't ask.

Rola [stamps her foot angrily.]: What the matter with you?

Dead Man[writhing.]: Do I have to answer?

Rola: You look disgusting. I suppose you are not even a man at all. [The Dead Man turns away. His head falls forward on his chest.]

Rola: What a nerve you have. Do you think because you are out of town you, in your condition, can stop me and talk to me? Next time I'll get people to flog you.

[She goes off.]³³⁶

In this first excerpt from the play *A Dance of the Forests*, there are movements we locate and describe around the text. We avoid isolating them from other dramatic extra-devices in this analysis. This is the way for us to provide a complete possible detailed explanation of each movement and other theatrical devices of course, in relation to the situation of this excerpt. What we have just written may also mean that, when we read the above passage from the play, we realize that apart from movements in question in this subsection, there are many other dramatic extra-devices in it. The movements read in this text are: coming up, entering, passing, running off, stopping, going quickly towards, hurrying, going nearer, backing away, turning away, and going off.

To begin with 'coming up', we find it better to remind the category this movement. In fact, 'coming up' is simply the process of moving. To this effect, we may consider two places in this process: the place of the origin and the present place. To avoid a limited interpretation, we think of and envisage a third place, that is to say, the place the character is going to. In addition, this movement is read in the first stage direction of the play *A Dance of the Forests*. It is written twice. This movement again,

³³⁶ Wole Soyinka, 'A Dance of the Forests' in *Collected Plays I*, op. cit., pp. 7-8.

is associated with the Dead Woman and the Dead Man whom the play writes about 'They come up'. But before they come up together, the soil appears to be breaking and the head of the Dead Woman pushes its way up. Some distance from her, another head begins to appear, that of a man. In addition, there is no doubt that the couple is that of the dead persons who come from the underground. This may also mean that they died during their existence in the world of living persons. They were buried, and now, thanks to the soil that opens when it seems to be breaking, the head of the Dead Woman pushes its way up first, and then some distance from her, the head of the Dead Man begins to appear. It seems very clear that the Dead Woman and the Dead Man come from a single place that is common and familiar to them. But they do not come from the same place when the soil appears to be breaking. Then, the Dead Woman comes up first before the Dead Man. Last but not least, the play writes that both Dead Woman and Dead Man come up slowly.

As for the present place, it is the world of the living persons where the couple of the dead characters meets the living characters that Dead Woman and Dead Man have left very long ago. So, from the world of the dead to the world of the living characters, the dead couple is uncertain, whereas the living characters feel proud, and express their refusal to the Dead Woman and Dead Man.

Then, 'entering' is actually a movement to the extent that it may also mean coming and going somewhere. Very often entering is an indication read from stage directions in a printed play. 'Adenebi enters', Adenebi comes upon the stage, the place where visible, observable and audible actions take place in him at the audience.

From what is just written we may understand the possible conflict between the old associated with the dead woman and dead man on the one hand, and the living characters such as Adenebi, Demoke and Rola on the other hand.

The movement that follows is 'passing close'. Its description shows that the character is moving from one place to another which is not determined. The description of this movement is reinforced by the prepositional phrase 'close to' which means near. The text as it is written presents the character Adenebi who passes close to the Dead Man. Through this movement we understand the attitude of one of the living characters, Adenebi to the dead character, who is the Dead Man. This attitude can be qualified as lack of consideration, treating with disrespect, refusal, fear from being in front of a dead character.

Such an interpretation finds its justification in the movement that comes next: 'running off'. Adenebi starts, stares and runs off. These other theatrical devices 'starts' and 'stares' work better with 'runs off' under analysis. These two facial expressions already mentioned reveal the attitude of mockery at the Dead Man, seemingly the unexpectation of the dead characters to the ceremony. When Adenebi comes to run off after he has passed close to the Dead Man, has started and stared at him, this fact lets more than one reader understand that he was extremely afraid of the Dead Man. At this step of analysis one may notice a rapid change in the attitude of Adenebi, a living character to the Dead Man, a dead character: he passes close to the Dead Man, then he starts and stares at him; last he runs off from the place they were together to a direction which is not indicated in the text.

At this level of analysis again, we find it better to consider theatrical devices of different kinds that co-occur in the same situation: passing and running are movements of the same category, that is to say physical actions whereas starting and staring are facial expressions.

In *A Dance of the Forests*, there is another excerpt in which we find the dramatic extra-devices: 'passing'. The movement is the same, and the situation remains that, the living characters do not take care of the dead couple they invited to the gathering of the tribes first of all, and the conflictual relationships of the supernatural characters, namely Murete, Aroni and Agboreko. These three characters may also be called forest spirits. The problem they are concerned with is that when Murete and Aroni have entered, unknown to the people, they have discussed the presence of the two un-illustrious dead: Dead Man and Dead Woman. Murete says to Aroni, 'they asked Forests Head for illustrious ancestors and you sent them accusers'³³⁷.

The stage direction which describes Murete and Aroni's entrance is also helpful to understand what they are, the situation and actions they are concerned with.

[A tree trunk to one side of the scene. Murete, a tree-demon, is about to come out of it when he hears some noise. Ducks. Enter Aroni, the one-legged. He looks as if he is going to hop right past the Tree when he stops suddenly and gives it a stout wallow. The tree – demon yelps.]³³⁸

³³⁷ Ibid., op. cit., p. 13.

³³⁸ Ibid., p. 12.

This excerpt is actually a stage direction which is a more broad production information; here we find descriptions of the directions ‘he looks as if he is going to top right past the tree’³³⁹ as well as the characters’ relationships and descriptions, and sound effects.

Again, from this stage direction we understand that Murete who is also called a tree-demon during a dance of the forests of the play’s title. Murete, a tree-demon also refers to another tree-dwelling power, that of the other forest dwellers, namely Aroni and Eshuoro.

Then we realise also that the other tree of the forest which Aroni represents gives the tree-demon a stout wallop. The latter yelps. Murete also called tree-demon is the character who passes out.

It is on the basis of what we have mentioned that the story shows the occurrence of the movement ‘passing’ under study. Indeed, this movement occurs in the play-within-the action or situation of the deities as characters.

First of all Murete’s declaration proves his courage as to his participation in the meeting of the living characters despite the stout wallop he has been given while his head emerges warily. He says: ‘No, when the leaves tremble it is no concern of the roots.’³⁴⁰

His determination is also seen when he adds, ‘the welcoming of the dead? No, I am going to drink millet wine at the feast of the living.’³⁴¹

In this respect, Murete’s intention causes the anger of Aroni who insults him ‘villain!’³⁴² The latter also informs us at the outset of the play that ‘it was not a dignified dance as it should be’³⁴³ because the dead couple are invited to the gathering of the tribes to tell human being’s past crime which are represented through the past criminal actions of Demoke, Rola and Adenebi, all of them composing the group of the living characters.

In addition, the actions leading to the occurrence of the movement involve Aroni, Agboreko and Murete at the beginning, and Ogun and Murete the doers of the movement when it occurs around the text. The play writes:

³³⁹ Ibid., p. 12.

³⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 14.

³⁴¹ Ibid., p. 12.

³⁴² Ibid., p. 13.

³⁴³ Ibid., p. 5.

[Exit Aroni. Murete makes a rude sign, re-enters the tree. Enter Agboreko, Elder of the Sealed Lips. He wears a white agbada and a white wrapper. Carries a clay pot full of millet wine. A bulky, unhurried man.]

Agboreko [sprinkles some of the wine at the foot of the tree and leaves the pot beside It.]: It is I, Agboreko. Murete, it is Agboreko that calls you. Ear that never shuts, eye that never closes. Murete, Agboreko brings you the unhappiness of his children.

Murete: Come back later. I have told you, the forest is big and I pay no heed to the footsteps of the dead.

Agboreko: Murete, if the hunter loses his quarry, he looks up to see where the vultures are circling. Proverb to bones and silence.

Murete: All right, all right. Come back later. I may have learnt something then³⁴⁴.

This excerpt from the play *A Dance of the Forests* bears some indications that it begins to create the situation in which the movement ‘passing’ is read around. As we can understand, the character of Agboreko draws our attention because he appeals to the forest for enlightenment on the identities of the ghosts when he gives Murete a libation of millet wine.

In addition, Murete is also named a tree-demon, and Aroni is one of the forest dwellers. In this respect, we may identify him with another tree. So, when Agboreko pours millet wine at the foot of the tree that is Murete, it is an occasion for the tree-demon to drink a lot. And this is probably the reason why, in his state of drunkenness, he did not see the way the four humans went. It is at this level of the situation that Murete, a tree-demon does the movement when he ‘passes’. Before reading the movement in the text, the entrance of another forest dweller is significant because it is in the presence of this character, Ogun, and his disciple, Demoke who could be on road that Murete does such locomotive movement that is ‘passing’.

[Reaches for the pot and takes a deep draught. Enters Ogun who hold the pot against his mouth and forces him to drink the lot at once. Ogun then takes him and turns him quickly round and round. Murete staggers about, quite drunk and unbalanced.]

Ogun: The four humans –which way did they go?

Murete: [points.]

Ogun : How recently?

Murete : How...How?

Ogun: Was it a long time?

[Murete picks up a leaf. Let's it fall. Takes a twig and breaks it off piece by piece, giggling all the while. Ogun impatiently slaps his hand.]

Ogun: You know Demoke, servant of Ogun-Demoke the worker of iron and wood. Was he among the four?

³⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 14.

Murete: [drunkenly.]: You

His role goes on.

Murete: You...Ogun...you...Ogun.[...]

Murete: [wildly flailing.]: Eshuoro, you bit off my shelter. I'll bite your head off...

Ogun : Gently...gently...of course you'll bite my head off. Don't forget, you are no friend to Eshuoro, are you...?

Murete[baring his teeth.]: I'll bite off yours ...Come here...just you come here...is it my affair if the wood cutter lopped off your big top. You take up much room away...who do you think you are?

[Aims a wild blow at Ogun. He dunks. Murete 'passes out'.

Ogun [examining him.]: Mm. Mm. [props him up against the tree.] [...] Demoke the carver, my friend and servant, it my axe you drove into araba, pride among the trees of Eshuoro. [...] I'll not forget you Demoke. I shall not forget. [Re-enter Obaneji, Demoke, Adenebi and Rola.]

Demoke: They are gone.³⁴⁵

The movement under description and analysis is qualified as locomotive because we read it, and it can be observed on stage. This movement is 'passes out'. In fact, Murete passes out immediately when Ogun evokes the name Demoke whose profession is sculptor in wood. The evocation of this name causes great fear in the heart of Murete who, being called also a tree-demon avoids meeting the carver. Demoke is ready, and has all his tools needed to cut down Murete, a tree-demon. It is true that Murete could be lopped down if he remained in that place because Demoke and his followers came after Murete had passed out. Demoke says while he re-enters 'they are gone', and Obaneji adds 'we will follow them if you like.'³⁴⁶

In addition, Ogun's evocation of the name Demoke is actually an invocation to the extent that while he says, Demoke re-enters with Obaneji, Adenebi and Rola. At this level of the analysis, we make clear that Wole Soyinka's aesthetic feature in *A Dance of the Forests* serves a useful function. It awakens the conscience of the living people as to the preservation of the nature, especially the forests, a word used in the title of the play. The preservation of the forests is for the benefits of all the people, and all over the world. Wole Soyinka is right because trees and forests provide them with oxygen which is very indispensable for human life. They also produce leaves and fruit used as food for the people. Trees contain some substances that cure some diseases.

³⁴⁵ Ibid., pp.14-15.

³⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 15.

Without any intention of exaggeration, we consider this, the aesthetics for human life. Wole Soyinka creates a world in which the living people, the dead people and the unborn coexist. Here, we call it the aesthetics of co-existence.

Beside these three categories of characters in *A Dance of the Forests*, we find forest dwellers or spirits who are supernatural characters. With their presence, Wole Soyinka leads the people to realize their duty to preserve trees and forests for their own profits.

In addition, Murete is happy; a tree-demon passes out when Ogun, god of creativity says the name Demoke, carver in wood. Therefore, people must not wait trees and forests pass out in their environments as a condition for them to be preserved. The people all over the world should realize their common destiny with trees and forests. There is no doubt that when people cut trees, the end is that trees are transformed into dust, so become men and women who die accordingly to situation in relation to devastation, climate change or any disease due to the lack of trees.

The passage in which the locomotive movement 'passes out' occurs, there are many other dramatic extra devices, such as shaking hands, backing away, turning away, going off, sounds of bells, shouts, gunshots from afar, smiling, laughing, rising and going towards, leaving quickly, turning and going out, eyeing, mimicking, etc.. All these theatrical devices of different kinds integrate with their respective specificities the meaning of the dramatic extra devices that is to say 'passes out' that they co-occur in the excerpt from the play, *A Dance of the Forests*.

To begin with shaking head, the part of the story in which this theatrical device occurs involves characters namely Dead Woman, Dead Man and Rola. In fact, it is the Dead Woman who shakes her head. The possible feeling this dramatic extra device expresses is sadness. This means that the Dead Woman is very sad because of the attitude of, firstly, Rola who is a character of the same gender as her, and secondly because of the opposition of the respective world they belong to: Dead Woman is a member of the category of the dead characters, whereas Rola belongs to the living characters. The way we define Rola's attitude to Dead Woman is the refusal of the help that the dead character asks to the living characters. The reason for this may be that they do not resemble each other:

Dead Woman: Stop. We lived here once.
[Goes. The Dead Woman shakes her head sadly. Rola enters, swinging her Hips.]
Dead Man: Madam please, will you take my case?

Rola: Even before you ask it.³⁴⁷

When we read these entrances, we realize that Rola and her followers do not know why the dead couple come to the celebration of the gathering of the tribes which is a feast organized by the living characters in the forests. It is clear that Rola and the other living characters have each two existences as Rola in the present existence and Madame Tortoise in his previous existence. So, the Dead Man and the Dead Woman are sent to argue in their favour so that the crimes the living characters committed in the present and the past may be forgiven. As it can be understood, when Rola refuses to take the Dead Woman's case this is synonymous with refusing forgiveness of their crimes. Additionally, this refusal is not for their own benefits.

Furthermore, there is another aspect which requires our interpretation. It is the good memory of the Dead Woman who remembers that she lived on Rola's earth once. This may also mean that the Dead Woman was not born dead. She was born a living character, and she died then.

The situation will be the same to Rola. She was born. She is still alive. She will end dying.

This dramatic technique that consists in creating the relation and making the living people in contact with the dead characters is actually an aesthetic feature in Wole Soyinka's *A Dance of the Forests*, a play we place in the context of African culture. Wole Soyinka writes on the will of the dead characters to help the people, and the refusal of the latter to be helped.

In addition, beyond the literal refusal of Rola, another interpretation seems possible. Rola and her followers refuse their past, that at this level is synonymous with their identity. So, Rola, Demoke and Adenebi who are the living characters deny their own past and identity. They express the refusal of their own identity, that is what they are: criminals and people doomed to death.

Last but not least, the relation between the dead and the living characters may open another debate in this context to the extent that the dead characters interfere with the living characters' affairs. Apart from the theatrical devices described and analysed

³⁴⁷ Ibid., pp., 7-8.

above, there are many others that co – occur with the movement ‘passes out’ in the text.

In relation to what we have just written, one may understand that extra dramatic devices of different kinds occur and co-occur in the same excerpt to mean the characters’ feelings and intentions. In this respect, the movements Rola does in front of Dead Man are also ‘going nearer him and backing away’. We read Rola ‘has gone nearer him’ and ‘she backs away’³⁴⁸.

These two locomotive movements are in opposition. The description of the first movement Rola ‘has gone nearer him’ shows she is moving towards Dead Man, whereas the second locomotive movement presents the same character Rola change suddenly his direction to Dead Man. We may see Rola makes a step behind. The possible meaning of these opposed locomotive movements could be the atmosphere of anger. This may also mean the state of psychological disorder in the mind of Rola in front of Dead Man. This interpretation is acceptable because these movements occur with another one which serve as the completion of the feeling the character expresses, that is to say, stamping her foot angrily. The character concerned is still Rola. She ‘stamps her foot angrily’. This bodily or physical action goes along with a speech. It is the question she puts to the Dead Man. Rola asks ‘What is the matter with you?’. This question is an additional information to the consideration Rola has for Dead Man. It is the feeling of rejection, refusal, disgust, displeasance, and doubt. This is obvious because Rola adds ‘you look disgusting. I suppose you are not even a man at all.’³⁴⁹

These words from Rola to Dead Man actually mean the attitudes of uncertainty, inexpectation, and doubt between the living character, Rola and the dead character, Dead Man. At this level of analysis we ask why Forests Head chooses Dead Man and Dead Woman to go to the gathering of the tribes of the living characters. In other words, why the living characters do not choose their own guesses to the ceremony they organize. In addition, we establish the relation between Forests Head, Dead Couple and the Tribes. Here, we understand that Forests Head pretends to lead both dead characters and living characters. We may also see in Forests Head’s mind the desire to do whatever he wants to the living characters as if he himself creates the different tribes that gather to celebrate their feast in the forest.

³⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 8.

³⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 8.

One may fairly well understand that in rejecting Dead Man and Dead Woman, Rola also refuses the domination of Forest Head.

In addition, above what we have said as far as the relationships between Forest Head, Dead Couple and Rola are concerned, we think of a possible symbolic meaning. First of all, when the people are independent, any interference in their own affairs by other people is a violation. This meaning derives from the relationship between Rola who represents the independent people, and Forest Head who embodies the people that violate the living people's sovereignty. The second meaning concerns the people themselves when they come to power and replace the colonial people. Their actions are similar to those of the colonizers.

Furthermore, two other body languages co-occur in the same stage direction: 'turning away' and 'head falls forward'. In fact, the character concerned with is Dead Man. He is still with Rola who has qualified him as being not a man at all. The play writes 'The Dead Man turns away. His head falls forward on his chest.' The description of these dramatic extra devices shows first of all the Dead Man looking in a different direction. In other words, the Dead Man refuses to look at Rola. Secondly, the Dead Man's head does not longer stand. These two theatrical devices work better to express the Dead Man's shame when Rola addresses him. The Dead Man is actually ashamed that is why he turns away and falls his head on the chest. He says 'OOO I am so ashamed . To be found out like that, so soon, so soon. I am so ashamed.'³⁵⁰

From the excerpt above read from the play, we realize that the Dead Man is really ashamed because of the way Rola finds him. He is not a man at all. Dead Woman, her partner's reaction does not clean his state of mind. The Dead Man continues with the expression of his shame. He adds 'I am so ashamed, so ashamed...'³⁵¹

The recurrence of the terms 'I am so ashamed' proves without any doubt that at this level the Dead Man is facing the opposition of Rola to the extreme. This causes him very great shame. In fact 'so ashamed' occurs four times in the excerpt under scrutiny.

In addition, the idea of great shame is reinforced by the use of the word 'so' which is an adverb of degree. The use of it is actually accurate to the extent that thanks to this adverb, the declaration 'I am so ashamed' proves the conflictual relation between the

³⁵⁰ Ibid., p.8.

³⁵¹ Ibid., p.8.

dead and the living characters, and the rejection that the dead characters undergo in the play *A Dance of the Forests*. Then the expression of such shame by the Dead Man reveals the feeling of inferiority he shares with Dead Woman as he, the Dead Man turns away, falls his head forward on his chest. The Dead Man does the movements because they are a couple.

The movements we have just described and analysed are: coming up, entering, passing close, running off, going, backing away, and turning away. These locomotive movements co-occur with other theatrical devices such as staring, starting which are facial expressions, and shaking head, stamping the foot, that stand as physical actions. The locomotive movements which are the main concerns in this section also occur in *The Swamp Dwellers*. In fact, the very first category of movement to mention is 'going', especially the one expressed by various phrasal verbs formed with to go, such as 'goes back', 'goes towards', 'goes into', 'goes out', 'goes to'.

There is no great need to give the meaning of the verb, to go. What can be said about is that, this verb means to continue moving from some place. That meaning is modified by the prepositions of different kinds chosen by the other to express his ideas. The excerpts below convey those locomotive movements, first of all: 'Alu [goes back to her work. Then-]: It is time he was back. He went hours and hours ago'.³⁵²

The movement we are concerned with here is 'goes back'. It means to return to the initial place. 'goes back' may also be defined as the movement that consists in failing to keep. The question which can be put without hesitating is the function of these movements: going back, returning, failing to keep. In addition, this phrasal verb 'goes back' presents the character from the place B back to place A. So, it is helpful to consider the actions done, and the feelings or thought expressed at the place B. However, the imagined movement from place A to B with all the elements such as characters, actions and thoughts may enlighten our understanding of the locomotive movement under description and analysis.

When we consider the excerpt from the play *The Swamp Dwellers*, the character who 'goes back' is Alu. This movement is read in the stage direction 'I Alu [goes back to her work.]' The two places are the inside and the outside the hut. The other character is Makuri. We understand from the text that Alu goes back from the outside to the hut

³⁵² Wole Soyinka, "The Swamp Dwellers" in *Collected Plays 1*, op. cit., p. 81.

described as having two doors on the left that lead into other rooms, and the one on the right leads outside. The room is fairly large, and used both as the family workshop and as the 'parlour' for guests. Alu goes back from the window where Makuri stands by, looking out, to the room. Alu 'goes back' to her work because she does not have the answer she expected from Makuri.

Alu: Can you see him?

Makuri: See who?

Alu: My son Igwezu. Who else?

Makuri: I did not come to look for him. Came only to see if the rain looks like Stopping.

Alu: Well, does it?

Makuri [grunts.]

Alu [goes back to her work. Then-]: It is time he was back. He went hours ago.³⁵³

A better understanding of the reason why Alu goes back to her work requires the consideration of the fact that upstage left, Alu, sits on a mat, busy at her work, and asks Makuri who stands by the window, looking out, if he can see Igwezu, her son who was back and went hours and hours. This stage direction can also be interpreted in a way that Alu joins Makuri at the window, and there she asks him the question. Alu is not actually satisfied with the answer Makuri gives to his question. She asks yes or no question: 'Can you see him?'

Unfortunately, Makuri does not answer 'yes' nor 'no'. He answers: 'I did not come to look for him'. The second part of Makuri's answer to Alu's question on his son shows his stronger desire for the weather than for his son, Igwezu.

Furthermore, beyond the literal meaning of the words used in the characters' questions and answers we find out the issue of family relationships. The most important aspect is the relation between mother and son as well as father and son. However, before the relatives' relations to their son, we realize that the male and the female parents live in the hut together. This is their sense of obligation; they obey the biblical recommendation:

And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female,
And said For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to His wife:
and they twain shall be one flesh?³⁵⁴

³⁵³ Ibid., p.81.

³⁵⁴ *The New Testament*, 'Matthew 19:4-5', p.17.

This quotation from *The Bible* indicates the three stages that may lead to marriage: leave, cleave and become one flesh. Makuri and Alu fulfil these conditions because the play writes that they live in the hut. But, they do not seem to have the same thought on their son. Alu the mother has a very strong love for her son than Makuri. In relation to this situation Alu knows what *The Bible* writes as far as sons are concerned ‘...children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward.’³⁵⁵

The text cited above is actually a declaration which shows that sons, the conception and the birth seem to result from a causal process are gifts God gives to the parents; they are not the result of their own fecundity. Alu the mother has got a better understanding of this truth. She loves her son more than Makuri. In connection to mother’s great love for their sons, we read:

Then spake the woman whose the living child was unto the king, for her bowels yearned upon her son, and she said, O my lord, give her the living child, and in no wise slay it [...] Then the king answered and said, Give her the living child, and in no wise slay it: she is the mother thereof.³⁵⁶

There is another aspect to be taken into account in this situation as far as the parents are concerned. It is old age. Makuri is an old man. In this respect old age influences the father’s love for their sons for the worst. This period grows and intensifies the attitude of carelessness to their sons in the life of the fathers. It is obvious that old age is the last period of life on hearth. So, the fathers need to enjoy all that they want because what is behind and after old age is death.

In relation to the father’s old age and weak love for her son, Makuri declares:

The old you get, the more of a fraud you become. Every day for the past ten years, you’ve done nothing but swear that your son was dead in the marshes. And now you sit there like a crow and tell me that you’re waiting for news about him.³⁵⁷

³⁵⁵ *The Holy Bible*, Psalms 127: 3, P. 463.

³⁵⁶ *The Holy Bible*, 1 Kings 3: 26, P. 268.

³⁵⁷ Wole Soyinka, ‘The Swamp Dwellers’ in *Collected Plays I*, op. cit., P. 82.

The excerpt above from the play, *The Swamp Dwellers* bears the indications that the old man has problems with his own conscience. He swears that his son was dead in the marshes; however he is also waiting for news about him. This reality may be due to his old age. The old father does no longer know what he wants. In this passage again, we read that the old man feels very weak love for the son in his old age as well as 'every day for the past ten years'. This may also mean that, even before the old age period, Makuri has not been a caring and loving father for his son.

Beyond this situation as we read it in the play, Makuri, the old man and Alu 'his equally aged wife' falls into mutual accusation as to the fact of going and looking for their own son. Makuri said, 'If you had any good at all in you, you'd go and look for him.' And Alu replies '...what's preventing you from going?'

This interaction does not mean that the old male and female parents have each the same degree of love for their son. Above all, Alu the mother seems to be the parent who loves the son more than Makuri.

In addition, their respective love for the son is revealed in the following except which is structured as a dialectic of insult.

Makuri: [looks at her for a moment.]: Ha! Don't tell now that a fly has been trying to suck blood from your dried-up veins.

Alu: If you had enough blood to hold you up, you'd prove it by going to look for your own son, and bring him home to supper.

Makuri: He'll come when he's hungry.

Alu: Suppose he's lost his way? Suppose he went walking in the swamps and couldn't find his way back?

Makuri [in bewilderment.]: Him? Get lost? Woman, isn't it your son we're speaking of? The one who was born here, and has lived here all his life?³⁵⁸

The text above actually reveals the mother's strong desire to see her son again who went to the city in order to try his hand and make money. She wants her husband to go outside and look for him, but unfortunately the latter refuses as he has always done. This situation makes Alu, the mother, does other locomotive movements: 'rising' and 'crossing' which can be described respectively as the movement consisting in getting up from one side to another side of the doorpost. In this respect, we read that Alu sits on the mat, busy at her work, unravelling the patterns in dyed admire cloths. It is in this position we focus the description of the first movement he does at this level,

³⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 82.

that is to say 'rising'. He continues with the second, because of his own and only objective, that is to go and look for his own son whom Makuri, the father proves very weak love, and sacrifices to other people, mainly those who live in the city.

In the play these movements are read as follows:

Alu [puts aside her work and rises.]: I am going after him. I don't want to lose too. I don't want him missing his foothold and vanishing without a cry, without a chance for anyone to save him.³⁵⁹

The first movement we consider at this level that is 'rising', occurs in this excerpt. It is Alu who rises after she has put aside her work. This dramatic device presents Alu in his dynamics to go and look for his lovely son. In addition, this movement reveals the feeling of Alu, the consideration she has for her son. According to her, his own son is more important than the work she has been doing. It is obvious that Alu finds nothing else to substitute to the son.

Furthermore, Alu's dynamics seen throughout his changing position when he rises is reinforced by the second movement that is 'crossing'. In fact, here again, it is Alu who 'crosses to doorpost and looks out'. This indication and Alu's say express in clear her determination to go out and shout the son's name until he hears her. That is the essence of his statements: 'I'm going out to shout his name until he hears me. I had another son before the mire drew him the depths. I don't want Igwezu going the same way.'³⁶⁰

The reading of Alu's address to Makuri makes us understand the other reason that motivates her be determined to go and look for his son, Igwezu. It is the fact that she had another son before the mire drew him into the depths. And she does not want Igwezu go the same way. Alu's intention to go out becomes a fact because she goes out in order to look his son, and Makuri 'follows her'.

We find it better to write Makuri's role in an appropriate way so that we gain a better understanding of the forthcoming movement as well as Makuri's say. 'Makuri[follows

³⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 83.

³⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 83.

her.]: You haven't lost a son yet in the slough, but you will soon if you don't stop calling down calamities on their heads.'³⁶¹

In the excerpt above we read the occurrence of another extra dramatic device, that is 'follows her'. It is Makuri, the old man who follows Alu, his wife because she goes out to look for his son, Igwezu. Makuri's locomotive movement aims at preventing her from going out, looking for his son. Makuri tells Alu to stop calling his son. He also opposes to Alu thinking on the loss of his son, when he says: 'you haven't lost a son yet'.

In addition, Makuri intimidates his wife to stop shouting the name of his son Igwezu, because this will 'call down calamities on their heads.'

The above statement by Makuri is an if-clause that can also be rephrased as follows: If Alu does not stop calling down calamities on the sons' heads through shouting their names, she will lose them. The understanding we have of this address is that Makuri is master of Alu's fate. He knows more about what can happen in all circumstances of the family life. In this sentence too, he tells Alu that the two sons are still alive in the city. He also asserts that the city is a large place. Alu could live there all his life and never meet half the people in it. Makuri wants Alu changes his mind as to the intention of going out to look for his son. Alu obeys Makuri. She says 'It's not what I say'. She also reveals his strong desire, that is to see his two sons who are twins be together.

Furthermore, in *The Strong Breed*, it seems very clear that all these movements are not associated with the characters mentioned: Sunma, Eman and Ifada, but with ordinary villagers whose names are not indicated. The play writes:

[As Eman does not answer, Sunma continues her work, more nervously. Two villagers, obviously travellers, pass hurriedly in front of the house, the man has a small raffia sack, the woman a cloth-covered basket, the man enters first, turns and urges the woman who is just emerging to hurry.]³⁶²

The theatrical devices that occur in the excerpt above are: 'pass', 'enters' and 'turns'. In addition, the two villagers who are obviously travellers passing hurriedly in

³⁶¹ Ibid., p. 83.

³⁶² Wole Soyinka, "The Strong Breed" in *Collected Plays I*, op. cit., p.115.

front of the house, the man entering first and turning to urges the woman who is just emerging to hurry would give the impression that the lorry is about to leave, as a consequence, Sunma and Eman have to go and enter in the lorry in order to be driven to another place where they will find themselves out of danger. The two villagers' movements could be kept to further enhance the feeling of rapid change of mind by Eman, to whom the later does not adhere to. This situation would in it cause inner reflections leading to self-discovery because Eman himself left his village with fear of inheriting the work of a carrier that her own father was. He ends becoming a carrier in a strange village despite the fact that Sunma tells him to go away when she knows what could happen if they stayed in the village.

Furthermore, in Wole Soyinka's plays that constitute the corpus of this dissertation, theatrical devices also occur in *The Strong Breed*. The movements that occur in this play are: 'enters', 'pass', 'turns', 'returns', 'goes', 'move', 'runs', 'comes', 'walk', etc.

The list of movements occurring in the play presents them of different kinds. They are locomotive, elevating and gesturing movements. They are all natural means of expression and communication. As in the preceding sections, we are going to try to describe and analyse them one by one in order to provide the possible meanings detailed explanation.

In addition, if necessary, we say something about theatrical devices of other kinds when they occur in the same excerpt. This is actually what happens right at the beginning of the play, *The Strong Breed*: movements and other physical actions co-occur, not in the same excerpt that stands as speech and address of characters, read in the stage directions, but they co-occur in the text as a piece of writing considered at this level of analysis.

The story under study comes to the reader through the eyes of a simple minded stranger by the name of Eman. He is the central character placed between two persons of opposite characteristics. Sunma, a figure of love and authority is seen as the cold ruler of the household. She uses knowledge as a means to change Eman's destiny, that is, to become a carrier. Ifada, the helpless boy is predestined to be sacrificed during the imminent ritual in the village. The story begins with Sunma who orders Eman to make up his mind soon because the lorry leaves very shortly.

III-3-2-Dance and Mimes, Songs and Music.

James Gibbs in *Conversations with Wole Soyinka* presents the question-answer practice in which Wole Soyinka justifies the incorporation of dance, music, masquerades into his plays. He writes the followings,

Q: Should a young playwright try to incorporate music and dance in his play ?
 S: There is no question at all that any play succeeds in integrating music, dance, masks, and so on is at least one dimension richer than purely literary form of theatre

³⁶³.

From the quotation above, Soyinka defends one of the most important characteristics of his own theory of drama: the use of dance, music, masks, and mime, songs, chants which accompany them, in order to enrich the literary form of theatre, and bring to it, another dimension, that is to say, they make Soyinka's plays more interesting, and very close to the Yoruba culture.

In addition, the citation for Soyinka's 1986 Nobel prize for literature writes that, he is: "Who in a wide cultural perspective and with poetic overtones, fashions of the drama of existence". The "wide cultural perspective" mentioned refers to the fact that Wole Soyinka's writings, especially the dramas for which he is best known, are at once deeply rooted in traditional African expressive and performance forms like myths and rituals, dance and mime, music and masquerade and are also greatly influenced by such diverse Western dramatic and theatrical modes as classical Greek drama, Shakespearean and Jacobean theatre, and modern European and American antirealist and avant-garde forms and techniques.

This means that Wole Soyinka's plays have brought together some features of Africa, more definitely Yoruba, theatrical tradition; at the same time, it communicates with elements of the outside world such as English theatre tradition. In this regard, Wole Soyinka's own words clarify his intention in his plays, and single out one by one the elements or features of African theatre tradition in the plays:

African drama is sophisticated in idiom. Our forms of theatre are quite different from literary drama. We use spontaneous dialogues, folk music, simple stories, and relevant

³⁶³ *Conversations with Wole Soyinka*, Edited by Biodun Jeyifo (Literary Conversation Series: University Press of Mississippi, 2001), pp. 90- 108.

dances to express what we mean. Our theatre uses stylized forms at its basic accepted disciplines. I am trying to integrate these forms into the drama of the English language³⁶⁴.

Furthermore, Wole Soyinka was born in the traditional musical family. He had an early interest in music. The Nobel Laureate, Wole Soyinka sure has other talents aside writing. In a picture, Bernth Lindfors shows him with the guitar and a microphone. He may have been singing, playing the guitar, why not dancing. Dance, music, masquerade, songs, etc. are crucial to nearly all Soyinka's plays. He writes a whole play on dance: *A Dance of the Forests*. For Wole Soyinka, "dance is the movement of transition"³⁶⁵, dance is also the first of the metaphysical elements in *A Dance of the Forests*, dance – a non-verbal but highly articulate language of the body welding ecstasy with discipline and appealing not only to the senses of sight and hearing, but to erotic, intensely communicative, spatialising sense of touch.

One of the important ideas by Wole Soyinka quoted by Nkosi Lewis is that, the use of dance, music, songs, chants, mimes, masquerade, etc. works in such a way as to be means of expression. In clear, we mean that Wole Soyinka uses these dramatic features for effective theme delivery. There is unity between the different themes Wole Soyinka deals with, and the dramatic features he integrates in the plays. This unity also works between dramatic features of different categories in the same play, that, through reading, we discover their combinations and accompaniment with others. Dance and music are the essential dramatic features in the plays. The others, such as mime, pantomime, etc. are included in dance; songs, chants, drumming, beaters, flutes, guitar, etc. form part of music art. But, because of their dense use in the plays under consideration, songs will be dealt with, as dance and music, in a manner which visibly shows their categories and the ideas they express.

The reading through dramatic features cannot be carried out in a separation from the central and sub themes of the plays. And among the seven plays of Wole Soyinka under analysis, four of them show a very dense use of dramatic features. They are: *A Dance of the Forests*, *The Road*, *The Lion and the Jewel* and *Kongi's Harvest*.

³⁶⁴ Lewis Nkosi, *Home and Exile* (London: Longman, 1965), p.108.

³⁶⁵ *Critical Perspectives on Wole Soyinka*, Edited by James Gibbs, op. cit., p. 117.

III-3-3-Dance and Mimes.

To begin with dance, it is the indispensable total theatre idiom that Wole Soyinka has consistently used in almost all his plays. Dance serves as a metaphor in his comedies. Dance builds up Soyinka's comic drama, and serves to be as strong a medium of communication as the narrative idiom. Soyinka loves dance so much that he has written a full length play entitled *A Dance of the Forests* to celebrate the inevitability of dance in Africa, to give a local habitation and a name to the play, and to carry forward Soyinka's ritual experiment which is a concept that dominates most of his tragedies.

In Wole Soyinka's plays under consideration, 'dance of exorcism', 'dance of welcome', 'dance of Half-Child', 'dance of the unwilling sacrifice' and 'dance around the totem' are used in *A Dance of the Forests*; 'dance of the lost traveller', 'communal or festive dances', 'individual dances', 'the mime of the white surveyor', and 'dance of triumph' in *The Lion and the Jewel*; 'royal dance' in *Kongi's Harvest*.

To provide more useful details for a better understanding of the nature and function of each category of dramatic features, and the categories of dance, we have, first of all, the 'dance of exorcism'. This category of dance is performed to drive out evil spirits, demons from places, persons, or things in which they thought to dwell. In *A Dance of the Forests*, the 'dance of exorcism' is actually metaphorical as it is performed in the part of the story about the characters such as Demoke, Rola, Adenebi and Obaneji seek to drive out the dead pair who emerged from the ground, and whom they consider as accusers, tormentors at the celebration of the gathering of the tribes. Rola tells the Dead Woman to 'get out. Get out and pack' her things. In the course of the action of the play, they will be smoked out with petrol fume. The atmosphere of dance, be it metaphysical, is shown in the stage direction [Sounds of bell, shouts, gunshots from afar. The Dead Man listens.]³⁶⁶

The next category of dance is the 'dance of welcome'; the welcome that Dead Man thinks about when he hears all the sounds mentioned in the stage direction above. He says, 'This is hardly the sound of welcome.' This is followed by Dead Woman's metaphorical speech 'It is hard thing to lie with the living in your grave', and his

³⁶⁶ Wole Soyinka, "A Dance of the Forests" in *Collected Plays I*, op. cit., p. 8.

negative reply to Dead Man after she hears the noise 'Not the procession of welcome'. Beyond this apparent contradiction, the following stage direction makes things clear:

[The noise, very much like that of beaters, comes quite near the clearing. Gunshots are left off, bells rung, etc. It builds to a crescendo and then dies off in the distance. Enter the four who passed by the Dead Pair – Rola, Adenebi, Obaneji, Demoke.]³⁶⁷

In addition, Rola's talk of Dead Woman to Adenebi '...So I told her to get out. Get out and pack your things'³⁶⁸ is reiterated and reinforced by Demoke who rises, goes towards them, and must question them. Rola prevents him; Obaneji [takes Demoke by the hands and leads him firmly away. The two creatures stop. They want to go after, but the noise which they have just heard is increasing. They turn and go out the way they came.]³⁶⁹

After Demoke's confession and the exclamative call of the invisible Man's Voice, Obaneji leads the dead pair in the wrong direction. It follows that the beater's noise comes over, increasing during Ogun's speech. He goes off as the Old Man, followed by two of the councillors, enters, surrounded by the whole chaos of beaters.³⁷⁰ As the action of the play goes on, the beaters' noise were audible again, definite rhythm of drums was above beaters' noises.³⁷¹ Then, the beaters enter, shouting... The dancer follows almost at once...The dirge-man begins to recite within a few minutes of their entry. An assistant hands Agboreko the divination board, the bowl and kernels.³⁷²

The essential idea in Dirge-Man's invocation is 'Leave the dead some room to dance'³⁷³. Then, the Old Man turns away, disappointed. The dancer does not, of course, ever stop, although is lowered for Agboreko, and for the dirge-man. In addition, Dirge-Man 'goes to the drummer and gives him the two-fisted greeting. The acolyte, who has finished her sprinkling, begins to dance softly, growing rapidly more intense. He repeats, '...Leave the dead some room to dance.'³⁷⁴ The dirge-man joins one or two others in a casual dance in the background...³⁷⁵. In addition to this, the last speech of Part I by Obaneji tells about this dance, especially the fate of the dead pair

³⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 9.

³⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 9.

³⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 11.

³⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 28.

³⁷¹ Ibid., p. 35.

³⁷² Ibid., p.36.

³⁷³ Ibid., p.36.

³⁷⁴ Ibid., pp. 36-7.

³⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 37.

when he says ‘To the welcome of the dead. Your people refuse to acknowledge them. [...] Now they drive them out like thieves.’³⁷⁶ The dance of the welcome is interrupted by Eshuoro who considers it as ‘the day for Aroni’s harmless little ceremony. His welcome of the dead. [...] their gathering of the tribes.’³⁷⁷

Furthermore, to come back to the dance of welcome in a more specific way, we find it important to write that, this category of dance is normally performed to show respect and pleasure to visitors, and at the same time it provides a show of how talented and attractive the host villagers are. In *A Dance of the Forests*, the dance of welcome is closely linked to the dance of exorcism to the extent that it concerns Dead Man and Dead Woman on the one part, Demoke, Rola, Adenebi and Obaneji on the other part, not to forget Aroni, Ogun, Forest Head, Interpreter Eshuoro and Questioner. In the last group of characters, Forest Head plays the important role as he gives Aroni the instruction to ‘relieve this woman of her burden and let the tongue of the unborn, stilled for generations, be loosened.’³⁷⁸ Before this instruction, Forest Head says ‘...It is time we had the welcome. Let the earthly protagonists be called, and see that the Interpreter is present.’³⁷⁹

This speech is followed by [Low music of Ibo flutes in the background...]. Even [...Soft rhythmic drumming accompanies Forest Head’s last instruction. The Interpreter moves and masks the three protagonists. The mask-motif is as their state of mind – resigned passively. Once masked, each begins to move round in a slowly widening circle, but they stop to speak, and resume their sedate pace as they chorus the last words.]. As a result of all that has been done and said, Forest Head himself declares, ‘...this is the moment for the welcome of the dead.’³⁸⁰

Furthermore, the ‘dance of the Half-Child’ as it is marked in the play, is thus the central moments of trial and, as with most of the central moments in *A Dance of the Forests*, Wole Soyinka stresses its enigmatic nature. Through this dance, and the symbolic presence of the Half-Child in the play, Soyinka seeks for the possibility of positive change. He believes that oppression and destruction are not the prerogative of a generation, but an eternal phenomenon he examines through a particular scene of the play, we mean, the scene with the Half-Child, and its dance.

³⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 39.

³⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 41.

³⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 63.

³⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 63.

³⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 64.

The so-called ‘dance of the Half-Child’ follows the ‘dance of welcome’. The reason for this is that, just after Forest Head’s pronouncement of the time for the welcome of the dead, he ‘Goes to his seat, impassive. Enter the Dead Woman, unpregnant, leading the Half-Child by the hand. As each spirit is summoned, one of the humans becomes agitated, possessed and then pronounces. To this effect, the voices of symbiotic spirits who speak through the masked human beings, the grotesque Triplets, and the fiercing dancing setting it apart from the more familiar conversations of men and gods make this scene dramatically and theatrically entirely different from the rest of the play. Reading through this dramatic dance reveals the perilous situation of the Half-Child with all the hostile forces around him. The ‘dance of the Half-Child’ occurs from its first entrance up to Demoke’s decision to give the child back to his mother.

In fact, just after the Spirit of the Palm has spoken through a possessed human being to promise, ‘Heads will fall down, / Crimson in their red!’³⁸¹, Eshuoro, disguised as the Figure in Red, enters, presumably to represent bloody death. The Half-Child begins a game of *sesan* (as it is mentioned in the play) in which the Figure in Red joins. Unhappy, the Half-Child moves away from the game, and then returns to it, revealing his nature, that is, he embodies the ‘Abiku’, a concept which originates in the traditional African belief of ‘the wanderer child who dies and returns again and again to plague the mother’. The Half-Child says that he is a strange baby who is no sooner born than all it desires is to die and be born again.

As the action of the play goes on, the Half-Child appears in an excerpt of the play with the Spirits of Darkness, Precious Stones, the Pachyderms, and the Rivers with the words ‘Branded womb, branded womb’³⁸²

The following stage direction also bears indications of a dance in this scene of the Half-Child, especially in their game of ‘*sesan*’ with the Figure in Red,

[Silence. All movements stop except for the Half-Child and the Figure in Red playing out their game. The Figure in Red flicks all the sedes into the hole, the Half-Child scoring none. Triumphant he scoops up the sedes in his hand, rises fully. Forest Head rises, Aroni with him. There is some measure of consternation from the forest spirits. He looks round to where Eshuoro was last seen. Eshuoro is no longer there. Aroni makes a move towards the Figure in Red, but Forest Head restrains him. From a distance, a slow rumble, gathering force.]³⁸³

³⁸¹ Ibid., p. 64.

³⁸² Ibid., p. 65.

³⁸³ Ibid., p. 67.

Reading through this stage direction, we learn that the game of sesan acquires significance; when the Figure in Red wins, it is to claim the Half-Child as an agent of death, that is, to make him into an abiku.

In another stage direction, we read a little about dance in the Half-Child scene,

[The distant noise grows more insistent. What appears to be a cloud of dust begins to rise steadily, darkening the scene. Aroni moves with sudden determination towards the Figure in Red, but the Interpreter begins a sudden dance which comes between them, and Aroni is forced to retreat.]³⁸⁴

Then, in the ‘‘dance of the Half-Child’’, the human beings are then unmasked, and the hideous Triplets enter with the Interpreter dancing with them in delight.

Last but not least, concerning the ‘‘dance of the Half-Child’’,

The Half-Child continues slowly towards the Mother, Eshuoro imperiously offering his hand, furious as each step takes the child nearer her. Looks up sharply and finds Ogun on the other side of the woman, with hand similarly outstretched. Snaps his fingers suddenly at the Interpreter. A clap of drums, and the Interpreter begins another round of ‘ampe’ with the Third Triplet. The Woman’s hand and the Half-Child’s are just about to meet when this happens, and the child turns instantly, attracted by the game. Hanging carelessly from the hand of the Half-Child is the wood figure of an ‘ibeji’ which he has clutched from his first appearance. Eshuoro waits until he is totally mesmerized by the Jester’s antics, snatches it off him and throughs it to the Third Triplet. It jerks the Half-Child awake and he runs after it. Third Triplet, Interpreter and Eshuoro toss the ‘ibeji’ to one another while the child runs between them trying to recover it, but they only taunt him with it and throw it over his head. The First and Second Triplet keep up their incessant ‘ampe’. The Interpreter is standing near Demoke, and suddenly he pulls the Interpreter aside, catches the ‘ebeji’. Eshuoro moves at once to the Half-Child but he runs to Demoke and climbs to him. Everything stops silently appeals to Forest Head, Ogun appeals against him.]³⁸⁵

As far as the ‘dance of the unwilling sacrifice’ is concerned, it is performed by the god Eshuoro and his jester, and this dance is also linked to what causes Demoke’s confession, we mean, the death of Oremole, and the reaction of the already mentioned god of destruction, Eshuoro. The main idea in the above introductory sentence is that we read the performance of the unwilling sacrifice dance in two scenes. The first considers the Half-Child as the unwilling sacrifice for some of the characters who fight over him, and in the second scene, Oremole dies unwillingly. It seems also important to mention the involvement of Demoke, Eshuoro and Ogun, and others in these two

³⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 67.

³⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 75.

scenes. In fact, to begin here with Eshuoro and his jester as performers of the dance of the unwilling sacrifice, a part of the stage direction in relation to this writes,

...Aroni leads out the Dead Woman with the Half-Child. [...] Eshuoro gives a loud yell of triumph, rushes offstage, accompanied by his jester. [...] Eshuoro's jester leaps on stage, bearing the sacrificial basket which he clamps on to Demoke's head; performing a wild dance in front of him. [...] The front gets increasingly lighter as Eshuoro returns and dances out his frenzy, lashing his Jester with a branch. Noise of the beaters from a distance. Dawn is breaking. Ogun enters bearing Demoke, eying the sky anxiously. He is armed with a gun and cutlass. The sun creeps through; Ogun gently lays down Demoke, leaves his weapon beside him, flees. Eshuoro is still dancing as the foremost of the beaters break on the scene and then he flees after his Jester. It is now fully dawn. Agboreko and the Old Man enter, Murete, very drunk, dragging them on. The sound of the main body of beaters with the drummers continues in the distance.³⁸⁶

In this stage direction which bears indications of the performance of the dance about the Half-Child as the unwilling sacrifice, we read that the Half-Child suffers the ill will of the forest under Eshuoro. The latter has acted in such a way as to get the Half-Child, to be an abiku curse on humankind. This reading is also carried out taking into account the game of sesan that Figure in Red plays with the Half-Child, and especially the aspect that, Figure in Red disguised as Eshuoro, flicks all the sedes into the hole, whereas the Half-Child scores none. We know that, above all, Demoke intervenes through his human choice, that is, he restores the Half-Child to his mother. These aspects may also, to some extent, be evoked in the sense of reading through the dance of the Half-Child. To this effect, we find some similarities between these two dances: the dance of the Half-Child and the dance of the unwilling sacrifice.

In addition to this first dimension of the dance of the unwilling sacrifice, there is a second one in which Oremole is that so-called unwilling sacrifice. This is actually metaphorically a dance of the unwilling sacrifice. The whole part of the action does not mention any bodily movement to indicate the atmosphere of a physical dance. At this level we find it appropriate to give the definition of the term 'dance' as it is written in the *English Dialect Dictionary*, that is to say, 'a convulsive disorder incidental to swine'³⁸⁷. None of the characters involved in the play action performs a dance. The death of Oremole, we consider it as a form of the unwilling sacrifice dance because when he climbed higher on the araba tree he did not realize that Demoke would push him down, and fall from the tree and die. Oremole was disposed, consenting and ready

³⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 72.

³⁸⁷ *English Dialect Dictionary*, Edited by Joseph Wright, Volume II, D-G (London: Oxford University Press, 1961).

to die. Demoke killed him out of hatred, pride and envy. We may also say that Demoke sacrificed Oremole's life. In addition, Eshuoro's reaction in front of Demoke's murder of Oremole also indicates a kind of disorder, tension, etc. between him and Demoke whom he wants to punish and drive into the deepest slavery, but Ogun protects him.

The reading through this dance of the unwilling sacrifice reveals Wole Soyinka, as Margaret Laurence put it, 'reminding us of the inconvenient terrors of the human spirit.'³⁸⁸

The last mode of dance in *A Dance of the Forests* is the 'dance around the totem'. Here again, we realize that, this dance and the previous dance of the unwilling sacrifice have things in common: characters performing and acting in these two dances. And they seem to be performed simultaneously. In the same stage direction, we read indications that tell the performance of both dances. As for the dance around the totem, the excerpt of the stage direction is,

A silhouette of Demoke's totem is seen. The village people dancing round it, also in silhouette, in silence. There is no contact between them and the Forest ones. The former in fact are not aware of the other beings [...] Eshuoro and his Jester head Demoke relentlessly towards the totem and the silence dancing figures. Rola and Adenebi are made to sprinkle libation on the scene, continuously as in a trance. Demoke, headed towards his handiwork is faded away, and re-appears at the foot of the totem, the crowd parting in silence. He begins to climb, hampered further by the load on his head. There are only drums, [...] Demoke [...] Returns at the totem with a fire-brand; [...] Eshuoro returns and dances out his frenzy, [...] Eshuoro is still dancing as the foremost of the beaters break on the scene [...] The sound of the main body of beaters with the drummers continues in the distance.³⁸⁹

In this excerpt from the play, which by nature, is a stage direction, and about the dance around the totem, we read important ideas. Those ideas and the object which we think reveal the symbolic function and meaning of this dance are: the totem itself; the village people dance round the silhouette of the totem, not round the totem itself, and there is no indication of where the totem itself was; there is no contact between the village people and the forest ones; the village people are not aware of the forest people; Demoke disappears and re-appears at the foot of the totem, the crowd parting in silence, Rola and Adenebi's libation on the scene, as in a trance, Ogun leaves Demoke's weapon, etc.

³⁸⁸ Margaret Laurence, *Long Drums and Cannons: Nigerian Dramatists and Novelists* (New York: Praeger, 1966), p.33.

³⁸⁹ Wole Soyinka, "A Dance of the Forests" in *Collected Plays 1*, op. cit., p. 72.

The above mentioned ideas reveal the reality of division, disharmony, contradiction, controversy, lack of true knowledge, hypocrisy, disappointment, treachery, ignorance, etc. between the characters, who, in fact, are spirits gods, dead and unborn, and also between the characters and the totem: the problematics of carving the totem.

We find it better to remind that for the celebration of the gathering of the tribes, Demoke had a directive from the council to carve the totem. He was given no idea what it was intended for as he himself says,

For one thing, I did not know what it was all about. The council met and decided that they wanted it done. In secret. The tree was in the grove of Oro, so it was possible to keep it hidden. Later I learnt that it meant for the gathering of the tribes. When I finished it, the grove was cleared of all other trees, the Bush was razed and a motor road built up to it. It looked different. It was no longer my work.³⁹⁰

To Jonathan Peters³⁹¹, the above statement implies that the council, from all the eloquent speeches of its members, was planning to erect a monument to the nation without attaching any importance to the carving's motif. Not only do they show ignorance about their culture and its significance, but they are also insensitive to the artist's conception of his work. Concerned only with image-building and publicity, they lay bare the area around the totem and built a motor road right up to it. The motor road and the cleared forest, Peters intimates, are symptoms of modern technological progress and civilisation; but the secularisation strips the totem of whatever sanctity it might have had and makes it a popular spectacle which its creator can no longer recognize as his work.

In addition, the insensitivity of the councillors to the totem's intrinsic meaning and purpose consequently exposes their desire to return to the glory of past empires for cosmic rather than metaphysical reasons, a hollow wishfulness rather than a serious commitment to tradition and culture, Peters concludes. Peters' comments confirm Wole Soyinka's distaste for masks of hypocrisy that are worn everyday in the society, and he does this successfully through a sculpture-the totem which generates controversy amongst the very people who decide that it should be carved. Adenebi, for instance disenchant with the carving of totems. In his conversation with Demoke's father he declares,

³⁹⁰ Wole Soyinka, *Collected Plays I*, op. cit., p. 11.

³⁹¹ Jonathan Peter, *A Dance of Masks: Senghor, Achebe, Soyinka* (Washington D.C.: Three Continents Press, 1978), p. 176.

...by the way, I really ought to tell you how disappointed I was with your son's handiwork. Don't you think it was rather pagan? I should have thought something more in keeping with our progress would be more appropriate'³⁹².

Through the 'dance around the totem', the totem itself and all the other dance modes, we have elaborated on earlier, and read through in *A Dance of the Forests*, Wole Soyinka depicts the people's need to continue the cycle of treachery that nullifies whatever progress that has been made. The totem that Demoke carves unconsciously becomes a fitting symbol of turbulent times the nation is passing through.

Furthermore, the next dance mode is the 'dance of dance of lost traveller' in *The Lion and the Jewel*. This dance is performed in the first part of the play entitled the 'Morning', by Sidi, her village girls and Lakunle. In this dance which is also a mime, the villagers enact the experiences of the Western photographer on his first visit to Ilujinle. As for the circumstances in which this dance is performed, we read that, in the morning scene of *The Lion and the Jewel*, Sidi and Lakunle are talking, a number of dancers and drummers begin traditional pantomime and dance. The performers chant and move quickly around Lakunle as a way to try to encourage him to participate in the performance. Lakunle does not want to participate in the play. But, they finally wear him down with their chanting and dancing. Lakunle joins in as they reenact the photographer's first visit to the village. They take the shape of wheels, and Lakunle acts as the photographer taking numerous pictures of Sidi. Again, the play provides more details on this dance; it presents the four girls crouching on the ground, forming the wheels of the car. Lakunle adjusts their position and sits in air in the middle. He pretends to drive the 'car'. The four wheels rotate their upper halves of their bodies parallel to the ground in tune with the beat of the drum. The drum beat speeds up to a final crash. The girls dance the stall. They shudder, and drop their faces into their laps. He pretends to try to restart the 'car'. He gets out and checks the 'wheels' and also pinches them. Lakunle tries to start the 'car', fails and takes his things for a hard journey. That is the essence of the following stage direction:

...they begin to dance round Lakunle, speaking the words in a fast rhythm. The drummers join in after the first time, keeping up a steady beat as the others whirl round

³⁹² Wole Soyinka, "A Dance of the Forests" in *Collected Plays I*, op. cit. p. 31.

their victim. They go faster and faster and chant faster and faster with each round. [...] A terrific shout and a clap of drums. Lakunle enters into the spirit of the dance with enthusiasm. He takes over Sidi [...] leaves the right topstage clear for the four girls who are to dance the motor-car. A mime follows of the visitor's entry into Ilujinle. [...] The four girls crouch on the floor, as four wheels of a car. Lakunle directs their spacing, then takes his place in the middle, and sits on air. He alone does not dance. He does realistic miming. Soft throbbing drums, gradually swelling in volume, and the four 'wheels' begin to rotate the upper halves of their bodies in perpendicular circles. [...] The drums gain tempo, faster, faster, faster. A sudden clash of drums and the girls quiver and dance the stall. Another effort at rhythm fails, and the 'stalling wheels' give a corresponding shudder, finally, and let their faces fall on to their laps. Lakunle tampers with a number of controls, climbs out of the car and looks underneath it. [...] Examines the wheels, pressing them to test the pressure, betrays the devil in him by seizing his dance to pinch the girls' bottoms. [...] He climbs hurriedly back into the car, makes a final attempt to re-start it, gives up and decides to abandon it. [...] The drums resume beating, a different, darkened tone and rhythm, [...] Full use of 'gangan' and 'iya ilu'. The 'trees' perform a subdued and unobtrusive dance on the same spot. [...] Suddenly, from somewhere in the bush comes the sound of a girl singing. The traveller shakes his head but the sound persists. [...] Quickened rhythm and shortly afterwards, amidst sounds of splashes, Sidi appears on the stage, [...] Lakunle follows a little later, [...] Sidi has run right across the stage [...] accompanied by the villagers. [...] The stranger springs up every second to take photographs of the party, but most of the time his attention is fixed on Sidi dancing with abandon [...] two drummers who insist on dancing round him nearly cause the calamity to happen on the spot ³⁹³.

Through the dance of the lost traveller which draws much for its performance on Yoruba tradition, Wole Soyinka demonstrates the power of such a traditional dance for all the physical movements performed, to convert Lakunle, the westernised person, abandon part of his modern convictions, pretensions, and enters into the dance with enthusiasm. This entrance into the dance is helpful for the stranger who succeeds in photographing Sisi while she was bathing. As a consequence, Lakunle loses great part of his chance to win Sidi, the jewel; whereas, Baroka makes use of the picture of the beautiful girl of the village to get it published on the magazine.

Then, the next mime is called the 'mime of the white Surveyor'. A surveyor is the person who inspects something officially for the purpose of ascertaining condition, value, etc. This mime scene is in the form of a flashback as Lakunle relates to Sidi and Saduki how Baroka managed to prevent the work of building railway lines in Ilujinle. The scene begins with slaves trying to clear the forest under the supervision of the white surveyor. Baroka then enters and after he bribes him, takes his men away. The excerpts of the play, respectively in relation to Lakunle, Sidi and Sadiku's talk of Baroka, and the latter's bribing the white surveyor are:

³⁹³ Wole Soyinka, "The Lion and the Jewel" in *Collected Plays 2*, op. cit., pp. 14-17.

Lakunle [retreats just a little, but continues to talk.]: His williness is known even in larger towns. Did you never hear of how he foiled the Public Work attempt to build the railway through Ilujinle.

Sadiku: Nobody knows the truth of that. It is a hearsay.

Sidi: I love hearsays. Lakunle tell me all.

Lakunle: [...] And few men know of this trick – oh he's die-hard rogue sworn against our progress...yes it was ...somewhere here [...] Well the workers came, in fact it was prisoners who were brought to do the harder part...to break the jungle's back... [Enter the prisoners, guarded by two warders. A white surveyor examines his map (khaki helmet, spart, etc.). The foreman runs up with his camp stool, table etc, erects the umbrella over him and unpacks the usual box of bush comforts – soda siphon, whisky bottle, and geometric sandwiches. His map consulted, he directs the sweat team to where to work. They begin felling, matchet swinging, log dragging, all to the rhythm of the work gang's metal percussion (rod on gong or rude triangle, etc.). Two performers are also the song leaders and the others fill the chorus. 'N'ijo itoro', 'Amuda el' ebe l'aiya', 'Gbe je on'ipa' etc.]³⁹⁴

As for Baroka bribing the white surveyor, the play writes in the stage direction,

[The wrestler enters, stands horrified at the sight and flees. Returns later with the Bale himself who soon assesses the situation. They disappear. The work continues, the surveyor occupies himself with the fly-whisk and whisky. [...] Baroka enters a few minutes later accompanied by some attendants and preceded by a Young girl bearing a calabash bowl. The surveyor, angry and threatening, is prevailed upon to open his gift. From it he reveals a wad of pound notes and kola nuts. Mutual understanding is established. The surveyor [...] re-examines the contents of the bowl, shakes his head. Baroka adds some money, and a coop of hens. A goat follows, and more money [...] A gourd of palm wine is broken to seal the agreement and a cola-nut is broken. Baroka's men help the surveyor pack and they leave with their arms round each other followed by the surveyor's booty.]³⁹⁵

Reading though the mime of the white surveyor brings us into the central theme of the play, conflict between tradition and modernity. This mime is actually the depiction of the rapid modernisation of Africa, couple with the rapid evangelisation of the population, and its outcome, that is, this has driven a wedge between the traditionalists such as Baroka in the play, who seeks to nullify the changes done, and ongoing, in the name of progress. Baroka bribed the white surveyor for the route to move the railway much farther as 'the earth is most unsuitable, could not possibly support the weight of a railway engine'. In addition, reading through the mime of the white surveyor reveals hard works that the colonized people were forced to do for the benefits of colonial people during the colonial period of course.

After, there is 'the dance of victory'. By definition a 'dance of victory' as the terms write is any dance or special traditional movement done following a small or

³⁹⁴ Ibid., p.23.

³⁹⁵ Ibid. p. 24.

large victory. In *The Lion and the Jewel*, this dance is performed by Sadiku after Baroka has confirmed to her the loss of his manhood. It is performed in the last part of the play: 'Night'. As for the circumstances in which this dance is performed, the play in the corresponding stage direction writes,

The village center, Sidi stands by the schoolroom window. Admiring her photos as before. Enter Sadiku with a longish bundle. She is very furtive. Unveils the object which turns out to be a carved figure of the Bale, naked and full in detail. She takes a good look at it, burst suddenly into derisive laughter, sets the figure in front of the tree. Sidi stares in utter amazement. [...] With a yell she leaps up, begins to dance round the tree, chanting. [...] Sidi shuts the window gently, comes out, Sadiku, as she comes round again, gasps and is checked in mid-song³⁹⁶.

The following conversation between Sadiku and Sidi tells more about the dance of victory under consideration:

Sadiku: Oh it is you my daughter. You should have chosen a better time to scare me to death. The hour of victory for any woman to die.
 Sidi: Why? What battle have you won?
 Sadiku: Not me alone girl. You too. Every woman. Oh my daughter, that I have lived to see this day...To see him fizzle with the drabbest puff of a mid-primed 'sakabula'. [Resume her dance.] Take warning, my masters we'll scotch you in the end.
 Sidi: Wait Sadiku. I cannot understand.
 Sadiku: You will my girl. You will. Take warning my masters...
 Sidi: Sadiku, are you well?
 Sadiku: Ask no questions my girl. Just join my victory dance. Oh Sango my lord, who of us possessed your lightning and ran like fire through that lion's tail...
 Sidi: ...tell me the quickly. [As Sadiku whispers, he reyes widen.] O-ho-o-o-o-! But Sadiku, if he knew the truth, why did he ask me ... [Again Sadiku whispers.] Ha ba! Some hope indeed. Oh Sadiku I suddenly am glad to be a woman. [Leaps in the air.] We won. We won! Hurray for womankind! [Falls in behind Sadiku.] Take warning, my masters we'll scotch you in the end. [Lakunle enters unobserved.] [The dancing stops.]³⁹⁷

Last but not least, there is the 'dance of virility', which by definition is a dance for men, that expresses the virility of those who perform it. And virility is the strength and power that are considered typical qualities of a man, especially sexual energy. In *The Lion and the Jewel*, the dance of virility is also performed at 'Night' as the wrestling match between Baroka and a wrestler. The wrestler motions are mimed in order to impress Sidi with his prowess and virility. Baroka keeps on talking warmly and affectionately to Sidi and defeats the wrestler. The dance of virility is performed

³⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 30.

³⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 30.

in the end of the play, after Sidi has announced to Lakunle her intention of marrying Baroka and bear his children.

In relation to this, Baroka tells Sidi that ‘the proof of wisdom is the wish to learn even from’ and a girl like her must inherit miracles which age alone reveals. In addition, the following stage direction shows for the better the performance of dance,

Sidi’s head falls slowly on the Bale’s shoulder. The Bale remains in his final body-weighed-down-by-burdens-of-state attitude. Even before the scene is completely shut off a crowd of dancers burst in at the front and dance off at the opposite side without slackening pace. In their brief appearance it should be apparent that they comprise a group of female dancers pursuing a masked male. Drumming and shouts continue quite audibly and shortly afterwards. They enter and re-cross the stage in the same manner. The shouts fade away and they next appear at the market clearing. It is now full evening. Lakunle and Sadiku are still waiting for Sidi’s return.³⁹⁸

In addition to the ideas mentioned in the passage above, we read others in relation with the dance of virility:

Re-enter the murmmers, dancing straight through (more centrally this time) as before. Male dancer enters first, pursued by a number of young woman and other choral idles. The man dances in tortured movements. He and about half of his pursuers have already danced [...] The other dancers have now been brought back and the drummers resume the beat of the interrupted dance. Now begins the dance of virility which is of course none than the Baroka story. Very Athletic movements. Even in his prime, ‘Baroka’ is made a comic figure, held in a kind of tolerant respect by his woman. At the decline and final downfall, they are most unsparing in their taunts and tantalizing motions. Sadiku has never stopped bouncing on her toes through the dance, now she is done the honour of being invited to join at the kill. A dumb show of bashful refusals, then she joins them, reveals surprising agility for her age, to the wild enthusiasm of the rest who surround and spur her on. With ‘Baroka’ finally scotched, the crowd dances away to their incoming movement, leaving Sadiku to dance on oblivious of their departure. The drumming becomes more distant [...] showing especial relish where ‘Baroka’ gets the worst of it from his women. Sadiku looks at him for a moment while he tries to replace his obvious enjoyment with disdain. She shouts ‘Boo’ at him, and breaks into a dance movement, shakes a sudden leg at Lakunle³⁹⁹.

It follows that Sidi tells both Sadiku and Lakunle to get away from her and do not touch her. Then, ‘Sidi only cries all the more, beat son the ground with clenched fists, and stubs her toes in the ground.’⁴⁰⁰

In addition, she addresses Sadiku in the following terms:

³⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 49.

³⁹⁹ Ibid., pp. 51-2.

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 52.

Fool! You Little fool! It was a lie. The frog. The cunning frog! He lied to you, Sadiku. He told me...afterwards, crowing. It was a trick. Oh how I hate him! How I loathe and long to kill the man!⁴⁰¹

In a stage direction, it is written that, 'Sidi shakes head violently and bursts afresh in tears.'⁴⁰² Lakunle prays the Lord to forbid, but Sadiku replies that it is 'Too late for prayers. Cheer up. It happens to the best of us.'⁴⁰³

The use of mime with the songs, dance and drum beating along with enacting enables Soyinka to represent many vital issues of the play in a nut shell. The time duration of the play is only for a day as indicated by the sub-titles morning, noon and night. It is not without purpose, that he has given such significant sub-titles. The use of songs, dance, mime accompanied by drum-beating enables the dramatist to compress many ideas precisely and effectively. Additionally, for the function of this dance so-called the dance of virility, reading through it reveals the dramatization of the lie, the trick which bears Baroka self-declared impotency told to Sidi through Sadiku, and its result, that is the acceptance of Baroka's invitation by Sidi. She strongly believes in the fact of Baroka's impotency, and enters in his bedroom to mock him. We find that Wole Soyinka uses the dance of virility performed by Baroka, and even the dance of victory which causes the former to show the victory of tradition over modernity. The central theme of *The Lion and the Jewel* is conflict between tradition and modernity. In the play Baroka, Sadiku and Sidi represent tradition. They win over Lakunle who represents modernity. To this effect, reading through these dances shows the three characters mentioned above work consciously or unconsciously for the victory of tradition over modernity. Additionally, to some extent, reading through Wole Soyinka's dramatic dance in *The Lion and the Jewel* we discover the issue of gender in the sense that women seem to be marginalised; they seem to be properties that can be bought, sold or accumulated.

The last modes of dances are 'royal dance', the 'dance of love, unity, coalition for confrontation' and the 'dance of ecstasy' in *Kongi's Harvest*. To begin with 'royal dance', this category of dance is performed in the Hemlock section of the play by Oba Danlola, Wuraola his favorite wife, his Ogbo Aweri, Dende, and Danlola's retinue of drummers though in prison. This dance too, is accompanied by a roll of drums. 'Royal

⁴⁰¹ Ibid., p. 53.

⁴⁰² Ibid., p. 53.

⁴⁰³ Ibid., p. 53.

dance' is a socio-political dance. Our reading through it makes us write that this dance is also both physical, even though no physical and bodily movements are seen for the description of the performance, it is also spiritual and psychologic. The circumstances of the performance of 'royal dance' tell us that this dance with a roll of drums functions in such a way as to symbolize royal authority: its durability, continuity and its stability as well. In this regards 'royal dance' is performed in order to resist to Kongi's attempts to usurp King Danlola's traditional power. This 'royal dance' is accompanied with the beat of 'gbedu' drum, steps into slow. But Kongi finds in the performane of 'royal dance' an expression of desecration their National Anthem that is why, the Superintendent 'sizes the lead drummer by the wrist. Everything stops. Complete silence'⁴⁰⁴

In addition, Oba Danlola 'comes foward, dancing softly' and says 'this dance is the last our feet shall dance together'⁴⁰⁵. He repeats the same idea in 'This is the last our feet shall touch together' to show an apparent end of his regime. He pronounces 'ill-luck' for Kongi. This situation indicates 'royal decadences', and 'the two kings dance slow, mounful steps, accompanied by their retinue. Coming down on the scene, a cage of prison bars seperating Danlola from Sarumi and the other visitors who go out backwards herded off by the Superintendent'⁴⁰⁶.

As far as the 'dance of love, unity and coallition for confrontation' is concerned, it is performed by Daodu and Segi in the first part of the play. In addition, the 'dance of love, unity and coallition for confrontation' is performed in Segi's night club, and is interrupted by Secretary, who from the session of the Reformed Aweri Fraternity in Kongi's cell enters in the night club. The stage direction which tells more about this dance is the following:

Coloured lights, and the sustained chord of a juju band guitar gone typically mad brings on the night club scene, a few dancers on, the band itself offstage. Daodu is dancing with Segi. Enter Secretary flanked by the Right and Left Ear of State. Reactions are immediate to their entry. A few night-lifers pick up their drinks and go in, there are one or two aggressive departures, some stay on defiantly, others obsequiously try to attract attention and say a humble greeting. Daodu and Segi dance on, the music continues in the background.⁴⁰⁷

⁴⁰⁴ Wole Syinka, "Kongi's Harvest" in *Collected Plays 2*, op. cit., p. 63.

⁴⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 68.

⁴⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 69.

⁴⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 72.

Reading through Daodu and Segi's dance reveals that this performance seeks the consolidation of love, unity and coallision between the two lovers. And, this is the condition for them opposing to Kongi, and confronting him successfully. One may understand that the function of Daodu and Segi's dance is to oppose to Kongi and confront him. In this regards, the situation goes from opposition to another opposition. This means instability, series of conflicts: a very complicated situation. The first conflict is between Donlola, the traditional ruler and Kongi, the modern dictator, who deposes the former. The second conflict involves Daodu and Segi against Kongi. And it is probable that Daodu enters in conflict with Danlola because of his actions, that he stops the king's drums in the same way as Kongi through his Superintendent. This is actually paradoxal to the extent that Daodu is Danlola's heir to the throne. Again, the situation between Segi and Daodu may also ends in conflictual relation, because Segi is Kongi's ex-mistress. In addition, facts and actions of Daodu can be interpreted in the way that he is very far from being master of the people's fate in Isma. In connection to this Ropo Sekoni writes,

his relation to the socio-political dimention of Isma is vague and thus the audience doubts Daodu's ability to complete the Herculean task ahead of him – the displacement of his uncle and Kongi. For instance, little is known of his background, and his political plan⁴⁰⁸.

He adds,

he is not able to assume necessary control of urgent situations when they arise. This tendency to yield the position of leardership to others for fear of mistakes is evident in his compulsive dependence on Segi for directions⁴⁰⁹.

The passage of play referred to is,

Segi: I'll be back directly Daodu. Let everything go on as planned.
 Daodu: We've failed again Segi.
 Segi: No, not altogether.
 Daodu: What else can one do now?
 Segi: The season of Harvest, so let there be plenty of everything...
 Daodu: What are you talking about ? What do you I do now?⁴¹⁰

The facts mentioned above, in relation to the 'dance of love, unity and coallision for confrontation' actually reveal political instability in the land of Isma.

⁴⁰⁸ *Research on Wole Soyinka*, Edited by James Gibbs & Bernth Lindfors, op. cit., p. 129.

⁴⁰⁹ *Research on Wole Soyinka*, op. cit., p. 89.

⁴¹⁰ Wole Soyinka, "Kongi's Harvest" in *Collected Plays 2*, op. cit., p. 129.

The last dance is the ‘dance of ecstasy’. This dance is performed for the overpowering exaltation, sudden and intense feeling, and for the frenzy of poetic aspiration. It is performed, first of all by Sarumi alone as the stage direction writes, ‘Sarumi’s dance grows positively ecstatic, Daodu remains intensely frustrated but undecided.’ Then, ‘Danlola’s wives emerge and join in; the atmosphere is fully of the ecstasy of the dance.’ The play also writes,

Enter the women, singing, led by Segi who carries Daodu’s cloak. They dance onto the stage bearing mortar and pestle, cooking utensils, a cloth-beating unit, etc. They throw up their arms in derision and mock appeal to the world in general singing – [...] They curtsey to the seated Obas, perform a brief insulting gesture as they dance past the Reformed Aweri. [...] Segi signals to the women to stop. [...] The women resume their song, dance out,...⁴¹¹

As clear as it may appear, the performance of this dance, so-called the ‘dance of ecstasy’ leads ultimately to the beginning of the feast, that, the feast of the new yam during which, Kongi expects Oba Danlola to bring him the new yam on his own hands in the presence of the people as a way for him to accept the replacement of his traditional authority by Kongi’s rule.

The essence of the performance of this dance is that, all the performers feel confident on their way to encounter Kongi’s plan very successfully. This may also mean that the dancers now know that Kongi will fail in his attempt to take Danlola’s authority. This dance announces the beginning of the festival because, in the stage direction, ‘They beat on their drums and clash cymbals deafeningly’ and ‘It is the signal for the feast to begin [...] The dancing, the singing are only part of it...’⁴¹². The last stage direction we mention in relation to this ‘dance of ecstasy’ is written as follows: ‘The rhythm of pounding emerges triumphant, the dance grows frenzied. [...] Kongi [...] exhorts, declaims, reviles, cajoles, damns, curses, vilifies, excommunicates, execrates until he is a demonic mass of sweat and foam at the lips’⁴¹³.

Reading through the ‘dance of ecstasy’ shows the absence of characters who, because of what this dance is all about, should have been among the performers. We mention Danlola and Daodu. The fact of them being away from the performance of such dance, which may be synonymous with the dance of victory creates the

⁴¹¹ Ibid., p. 125.

⁴¹² Ibid., p. 130.

⁴¹³ Ibid., p. 132.

atmosphere of doubt and uncertainty in the socio-political situation in the of Isma after the festival. This situation too, prevents us from considerations and affirmations of the kind, Danlola is the winner in the conflict which opposes him to Kongi, or the later wins over the former. We also think that, from the above mentioned ideas, political leaders who come to power by force end becoming dictators, and dictatorship creates political uncertainty and instability; people living under dictatorship regimes are also tempted to resort to the same force and power to chase them away.

The term hegemony can be applied to the socio-political situation of Isma described in the play, mainly between Kongi against Danlola, first of all, then between Segi and Daodu against Kongi, after more probably between Daodu against Danlola, last between Segi against Daodu. In *African Literatures and Beyond: a Florilegium* we read,

Soyinka is suggesting that 'the hegemonic' never installs itself as a singular instance and that at a given moment there might be different formations of it. Furthermore, it is suggested that 'the hegemonic' must never be seen as closed, but as always open-ended and adaptable...⁴¹⁴

From the facts pointed out in the passage above, the only way to avoid different forms of hegemony, which detribalize peace and stability is the respect of democratic and constitutional principles. The people should govern themselves through the legislative they confer power to.

The different categories of dances, be them physical and/ or metaphoric, are performed to express ideas and feelings. To this effet, they cannot be read outside the central and sub-themes the plays deal with. Dances in Wole Soyinka plays are closely linked to themes; they are, sometimes mimes, accompanied by music and song. The last dramatic form we elaborate on is about songs.

III-3-4-Songs and Music.

Songs are aslo parts of oral traditional devices used as narrative techniques. They are within music art. They are always accompanied by musical instruments. In Soyinka's plays under consideration, songs are accompanied by drums, flutes, African

⁴¹⁴ *African Literatures and Beyond: A Florilegium*, Edited by Bernth Lindfors, Geoffrey V. Davis (New York: Editions Rodopi B.V., 2013), p. 15.

guitars, etc. which are very symbolic in negro African aesthetics. Songs make Soyinka's plays very interesting, and they express ideas through the themes they deal with. To this effect, in Soyinka's plays, songs encompass moral teaching for the natives in their daily socio-political activities. Four plays are dominated with a heavy use of songs. Songs as narrative techniques include the following types or categories: 'song of welcome' in *A Dance of the Forests*; 'songs of regret and anger', 'song of protest', 'bridal songs', 'song for celebrating marriage' in *The Lion and the Jewel*; 'praise-songs' in *The Lion and the Jewel*, *Kongi's Harvest*, and *The Road*; 'songs of political conflict' in *Kongi's Harvest*; 'songs of the passage of life to death' and 'war-chants' in *The Road*. All these songs are ritual.

To begin with the 'song of welcome', it is not sung, but recited by Dirge-Man in *A Dance of the Forests*, especially at the end of Part one. The context of this song in the play makes it a song which exposes the unglorious past of African past so that it is examined as a way to avoid cycle of stupidity, and envision a better future. The text of this song is the following:

Dirge-Man: Move on eyah! Move apart
I felt the wind breathe – no more
Keep away now. Leave the dead
Some room to dance
If you see the banana leaf
Freshly fibrous like a woman's breasts
If you see the banana leaf
Shred itself, thread on thread
Hang wet as the crepe of grief
Don't say it's the wind. Leave the dead
Some room to dance.⁴¹⁵

In this song, which in fact is a ritual song, the essential fact is Dirge-Man's call for a space for the dead to dance metaphorically, that is to express themselves freely on the crimes the living characters who are still alive in a new existence committed upon them eight centuries ago. The song of Dirge-Man is about the suffrance the dead couple underwent. In this regards, this song sounds and presents aspects of Black American folklore characterized by the Negro spiritual which is a kind of liturgical song that was sung by black slaves in the plantation in America. Without any doubt, Wole Soyinka in the 'song of welcome' above refers to African American songs symbolized by the negro spiritual to show the parallelism between Black American and African

⁴¹⁵ Wole Soyinka, "A Dance of the Forests" in *Collected Plays 1*, op. cit., p. 36.

aesthetics since the latter stems from the former. For instance, in the plantation field, peasants in their field, sing to rhythm and spur themselves in their works. Soyinka chooses to adopt this tropical experience in his works to better convey themes dealing with Postcolonial Nigeria.

Then, we deal with 'songs of regret and anger'. In fact, in the African American culture, "Sorrow Songs" are literally songs from the souls of black folk. These songs served as a device for self expression within the slaved population. There was no education for those enslaved and this was one way they were able to express themselves. Some of the songs are even "welled up from black souls in the dark past". These songs start with despair, but by the end there is an array of hope. This is symbolic of the life of the slaves. The songs were used to describe the suffering that they went through and the hope they eventually felt⁴¹⁶.

The illustration is in *The Lion and the Jewel*. The song is as follows:

'N' ijo itoro
'Amuda el'ebe
I' aiya;
'G be je on' ipa'⁴¹⁷

This song is not translated into English as the others. Its context and part of the stage direction which comes before bear indications that are helpful in understanding its meaning. In fact, this son is sung in the scene of the white surveyor. In addition, the play writes,

'Enters the prisoners, guarded by two warders', [...] A white surveyor [...] directs the sweat team to where to work. The begin felling, matchet swinging, log dragging, all to the rhythm of the work gang's metal percussion (rod on gong or rude triangle, etc.). The two performers are also the song leaders and the others fill the chorus. 'N' ijo', Amuda el' ebe l'aiya', 'Gbe je on' ipa' etc ⁴¹⁸.

The song under consideration is sung by the prisoners working on the railway track. According to Ogunba "It was very popular in 1940s and later became a favourite percussion song among prisoners"⁴¹⁹. It expresses the spirit of regret and anger which

⁴¹⁶ http://wiki.answers.com/Q/What_are_sorrow_songs?#slide=9? (March 2015).

⁴¹⁷ Wole Soyinka, "The Lion and the Jewel" in *Collected Plays 2*, op. cit., p. 23.

⁴¹⁸ Ibid., p. 23.

⁴¹⁹ Oyin Oguba, *The Movement of Transition*, (Ibadan: University of Ibadan Press, 1976), pp. 45-45.

provokes Lakunle to accuse Baroka of extreme conservatism. The use of songs makes the play lively and interesting since many on the stage are involved in the scene.

The next category is about 'song of protest'. The instance of illustration is in *The Lion and the Jewel*. It is Sidi's reaction to the words of Baroka's protests. The idea remains Baroka's lie on his impotency. Baroka seems to hide his virility behind impotency. But Sidi is hesitating, and she is very far from believing him. He says, 'By the years on my beard, I swear they slander me!' and Sidi replies 'You won!'⁴²⁰, 'I think he will win'⁴²¹, because she adds 'If the tortoise cannot tumble it does not mean that he can not stand'⁴²². This is Sidi's wish for, and knowledge about Baroka because, 'They say he uses well his dogs and horses.'⁴²³ This song is,

"Yokolu Yokolu. Ko ha tan bi
Iyawo gb' oko san'le
Oko yo 'ke...⁴²⁴

The translation is as follows,

"Yokolu, Yokolu, what say you now?
The wife knocked down the husband
And he now sprouts a hunchback..."⁴²⁵

Sidi repeats this song throughout Baroka's protest. In addition, this song also sounds as a mockery song because only at this level of the action Baroka is qualified as the defeated man, nursing his hip, goes to the corner of the room and lifts out a low 'ako' bench. He sits on the floor [...], then 'using only their arms now, they place their elbows on the bench and grip hands. Soyinka effectively uses the word 'Yokolu' repetitively.

Furthermore, before dealing with 'bridal song' we find it better to examine two excerpts from *The Lion and the Jewel*, for which there is no clear indication for them being songs, as it is the case for the previous songs, but are essential as transitive situations that culminate to bridal song. However, it is important to note the special

⁴²⁰ Wole Soyinka, 'The Lion and the Jewel', in *Collected Plays 2*, op. cit., p. 40.

⁴²¹ Ibid., p. 38.

⁴²² Ibid., pp. 38-9.

⁴²³ Ibid., p. 41.

⁴²⁴ Ibid., p. 40.

⁴²⁵ Ibid., p. 40.

reference to distant music, light, drums, flutes, box-guitars and sekere as they accompany Lakunle's text through which he expresses his disappointment. He says,

And now I know I am the biggest fool
That never walked this earth.
There are women to be found
In every town or village in these parts,
And every one a virgin.
But I obey my books.⁴²⁶

We also note that, before Lakunle's moment of realization he remarks under the sounds of the distant music, light drums and other instruments,

Man takes the fallen woman by the hand'
And ever after they live happily.
Moreover, I will admit,
It solves the problem of her bride-price too.
A man must live or fall by his true
Principles. That, I had sworn,
Never to pay.⁴²⁷

The group commences singing again when Lakunle shares with Sadiku his views on marriage. Lakunle is mistaken when he tells the musicians that no one is getting married and they should return. It is at this strategic point that Sidi enters. There is singing and song; Sidi gets blessing from Sadiku who invokes the fertile gods so that they stay with her, and may the time come soon when she will be as round-bellied as a full moon in a low sky. Sidi exclaims, 'Come, sing to me for sedes/ Of children, sired of the lion stock.'⁴²⁸ The musicians resume their tune. She sings the following bridal song,

Mo te'ni. Mo te'ni.
Mo te'ni. Mo te'ni.
Sun mo mi, we mo mi
Sun mo mi, fa mo mi
Yarabi lo m'yei t'o le d'omo.....⁴²⁹

The translation is as follows:

My net is spread, my net is spread

⁴²⁶ Ibid., p. 55.

⁴²⁷ Ibid., p. 55.

⁴²⁸ Ibid., p. 57.

⁴²⁹ Ibid., p. 57.

Come close to me, wrap yourself around me.
Only God knows which moment makes the child...⁴³⁰

Through this song Sidi reveals her romantic sensibility and her dream for a matrimonial life. In addition, this song highlights her emotions especially, the happiness. She does not feel sorry for her seduction, but she prepares herself for her marriage. To her, it is a better proposition to marry Baroka.

As for the 'song for celebrating marriages', it follows the stage direction, [Festive air, fully pervasive. Oil lamps from the market multiply as traders desert their stalls to join them [...]. The crowd repeat the song after Sidi.],

To lani tolani
T'emi Nit' emi N;
Sun momi, we momi;
Sun momi, ta momi
Yarabi io m'eyi to 'led' omo⁴³¹

The meaning is as follows:

She belongs to me, wrap yourself around me
Come close to me, wrap yourself around me
Only God knows which moment makes the child.'⁴³²

This song is for celebrating marriages. Along with Sidi, the crowd also sings. Thus, songs are an essential part of the village. We also add that the two songs above have things in common. The essential is that, they are all about marriage and childbirth for which Sidi herself sings the praise. The particularity of these two songs is that they are in Yoruba, and only Yoruba sings the union of the lion and the jewel.

The next category is about 'praise songs'. They are defined as one of the most widely used poetic forms in Africa; a series of laudatory epithets applied to gods, men, animals, plants, and towns that capture the essence of the object being praised. The praise song is not part of Western cultures, though the 'eulogy' is a similar form. They are almost always positive. Interestingly, African praise songs can include negative things as well as positive; indeed, they are intended to be descriptive rather than simply

⁴³⁰ Ibid., p. 57.

⁴³¹ Ibid., p. 58.

⁴³² Ibid., p. 58.

laudatory. Among some Bantu-speaking peoples, the praise song is an important form of oral literature.⁴³³

In the plays like *The Road*, *The Lion and the Jewel* and *Kongi's Harvest* the use of praise-songs is relevant.

To begin with *The Road*, the praise-song is in Part two of the play. The action of the play which is the context of this song involves characters such as Samson, Particulars Joe, Kotonu, Say Tokyo Kid and Professor. They are talking about death by road accident as a way for them obtaining all that they need to live. Samson addresses Particulars Joe. He says, 'If you see accident make you tell me I go run go there before useless men steal all the spare part finish.'⁴³⁴ In addition, road accident, the number of victims and how their bodies are destroyed is like war. That is why Professor compares it to 'Like a battlefield they always say. Like a battlefield.'⁴³⁵ In relation to this, Kotonu, the driver says, 'Much more peaceful to trade in death than to witness it.'⁴³⁶ Particular Joe calls Samson 'bloody dealer in death'⁴³⁷, and he asks him where he was on the day of the Drivers' Festival. Very surprisingly, Samson answers, '...Professor. He handles everything for us'⁴³⁸. This leads Professor asks all of them to 'Call out the hymn. Any song will do but to restore my self-confidence make it a song of praise. But mind you don't disturb me. I feel like working.'⁴³⁹ In a stage direction we read [Falls straight on his papers as the group sings his favourite praise-song.]

Professor anjonnu t'awa
 Professor anjonnu t'awa
 Baba wa l'oke baba
 Baba wa l'oke baba
 Eni ba magbe mi san'le, ko da'wo duro
 Mo leni lehin, ejo ragbada l'ori awo
 Ay' awo pada,ejo ragbada l'ori awo
 Ota o lef'ori oma baba gun'yan jc
 A b'oro soro ab'elerigbo b'okele
 Baba wa l'oke baba
 Baba wa l'odo baba....⁴⁴⁰.

⁴³³ <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/473871/praise-song> (March 2015).

⁴³⁴ Wole Soyinka, 'The Road' in *Collected Plays 1*, op. cit., p. 218.

⁴³⁵ Ibid., p. 219.

⁴³⁶ Ibid., p. 219.

⁴³⁷ Ibid., p. 219.

⁴³⁸ Ibid., p. 219.

⁴³⁹ Ibid., p. 220.

⁴⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 220.

The translation is as follows,

Professor, our being like demon
 Professor, our being like demon
 The elder above us
 The elder below
 The hand that thinks to smash me, let it

Pause a while

I have one behind me, coiled snake on Mysteries
 He moults in season, coiled snake on Mysteries
 The foe cannot pound the head of a Father's
 Son like yam
 Who holds discourse with spirits, who dines with
 The Ruler of Forests
 He is elder above us
 He is our elder below...⁴⁴¹

The Professor is their elder above and below them. They request the hand that plans to destroy them to stop a while since there is a “coiled snake on mysteries”⁴⁴². The enemy cannot destroy anyone who holds discourse with spirits and who dines with the ruler of the forest. The above song is sung in order to boost up Professor's confidence. So he allows the group to sing favorite praise song about communication with the spirit of the world. Here he is depicted as their protective patron and the link between the world of men and gods. Through this song Soyinka has effectively brought out the anguish and despair, giving a clear picture of man's insecurity, aggressiveness and evasiveness. They contrast the greed, the violence in the world of politics and the quest for spiritual peace. Above all this song deals with death, the main theme in *The Road*.

In *The Lion and the Jewel*, Baroka breaks out in a great song of self-praise when he hears from Sadiku that Sidi thinks he is too old to marry her. He sings,

Did I not, at the festival of Rain,
 Defeat the men in the long-tossing match?
 Do I not still with the most fearless ones,
 Hunt the leopard and the boa at night
 And save the farmers' goats from further harm?
 And does she say I'm old?
 Did I not, to announce the Harmattan,
 Climb to the top of the silk-cotton tree,
 Break the first pod, and scatter tasseled seeds
 To the four winds-and this but yesterday?

⁴⁴¹ Ibid., pp. 231- 32.

⁴⁴² Ibid., p. 232.

Do any of my wives report
 A failing in my manliness?
 The strongest of them all
 Still wearies long before the lion does!
 And so would she, had I briefest chance
 To teach this unfledged bridling
 That lacks the wisdom to embrace
 The rich mustiness of age.⁴⁴³

In the self-praise song above by Baroka, the essential ideas are: he alone has such power among the lions; age does not decline his virility; he is capable for seducing and winning any beautiful woman or girl whatever the means he uses; the strongest of his wives get exhausted before he starts, so will be the situation of the young beautiful; he will give her chance to learn more. The other aspect we find better to mention is the repetition of 'Did not I' which also becomes 'Do not I' to actually express the idea of self-praise, capacity, possibility, he did and is still doing what others could not. Furthermore, in *The Lion and the Jewel* are parts of the text that indicate the issue of praise. But, they are not actually songs like those we have mentioned above. For instance, Sidi praises Lakunle for his performance and the opportunity he takes to her more. Then, in a stage direction, we read that,

Sadiku dips her hand briskly in Lakunle's pocket, this time with success [...] she has darted to the drummers and pressed a coin a piece on their foreheads, waving them to possession of the floor. Tilting their heads backwards, they drum her praise...⁴⁴⁴

Through this action of the play about praise, we read more about a traditional practice of the Yoruba. This part of the play evokes the reality of the lifehood of professional drummers. Timothy writes regarding this, 'The person whose praise is sung is expected to dance towards them and begin to press money on the forefactor.'⁴⁴⁵ The text explicates more that if one is not ready to give money to them, it is considered as an act of belittling one's image in the society. As Lakunle is not ready to spend money for the singers, Sadiku wants to save his face, so she plunges her hand into his pocket and takes some money for them.

⁴⁴³ Wole Soyinka, 'The Lion and the Jewel' in *Collected Plays 2*, op. cit., p. 27.

⁴⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 51.

⁴⁴⁵ T. Ajani Timothy, 'What Happened to 'Queen's English': Creativity and Innovation in Wole Soyinka's Collected Plays', *West African Review*, Vol. 7, pp. 15 (2005).

Furthermore, in *Kongi's Harvest* 'praise songs' are in the 'Hemlock' section and in part one and part two as well. The 'Hemlock' section of the play sounds like, and is structured in the manner of a song, here a praise-song which is about royal quality. As for the second, the text is the following,

Oba ni i fepo inu ebo ra'ri
 Orisa l'oba
 Oba ni fepo inu ebo r'awuje
 Orisa l'oba⁴⁴⁶

Translated into,

None but the king
 Takes the oil from the cross roads
 And rubs it his awuje
 The king is god.⁴⁴⁷

The above praise-song is sung by Oba Sarumi. The singer pays tribute to the might and majesty of the king.

As for the second praise-song, it is associated with the coming of Secretary to Segi's club to announce a message. He is stuck by the beauty of Segi. He tells her as he enters 'Like a word with you. In private.' And Segi replies, 'You can see I'm occupied Mr. Secretary.' Secretary insists by telling Daodu that Segi is 'Elegant. Very elegant'. But, he also asks Daodu, 'is she really as dangerous as they say'⁴⁴⁸. We note that Segi's beauty sticks all men, and she always finishes destroying them physically. The praise-song under consideration is sung by Daodu, another Segi's lover, Segi, Kongi's former mistress, of course in praise of her beauty. This song is,

A coiled snake
 Is beautiful asleep
 A velvet bolster
 Laid on flours

 If the snake would
 Welcome me, I do not wish
 A softer pillow than
 This lady's breasts

 But do not fool with one
 Whose bosom ripples

⁴⁴⁶ Wole Soyinka, 'Kongi's Harvest' in *Collected Plays 2*, p. 109.

⁴⁴⁷ V. N. Manjula, 'A Song for the Road: Wole Soyinka's Imagery and Tradition', p. 95.

⁴⁴⁸ Wole Soyinka, 'Kongi's Harvest' in *Collected Plays 2*, op. cit., pp. 72; 74.

As a python coiled
In wait for rabbits ⁴⁴⁹

As we have mentioned it in the introductory part of the analysis of ‘praise-songs’, this song includes only negative things to know the character and the personality of Segi. She is very dangerous. In addition, in the above song, Daodu compares Segi’s skin to a black glistening snake which passes in the sun into cool shadows. He also compares Segi to a coiled snake which is beautifully sleeping in a velvet bolster laid on flowers. If this python of a woman welcomes him, he prefers her breast to a softer pillow. By the end of the song, Daodu states that with a python coiled, whose bosom ripples for its prey, one should not be fooled with.

In addition we read that, Daodu’s negative praise-song for Segi’s beauty is followed by Secretary’s turn-taking which is also a praise-song remembering him Segi, the same one whom they warn,

Do not stay by the sea
At night
Mammy Watta frolics by the sea
Do not play
With Daughter of the sea....
It’s picking at my mind but it just will not surface ⁴⁵⁰.

Then, Daodu agrees with Secretary in another negative praise-song that,

She is still, but only as
The still heart of a storm.
Segi, turn on me eyes
That were bathed in tender seas
And tender springs⁴⁵¹.

The stage direction coming after this song, indicates that Secretary’s face becomes clear suddenly, he opens his eyes, stares hard at Segi.

To this regards, Daodu sings another praise-song, now for Secretary,

Your eyes are
Cowrie shells, their cups
Have held much brine

It rained

⁴⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 88.

⁴⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 88.

⁴⁵¹ Ibid., p. 88.

Beads of grace
That hour of your birth

But it fell
From baleful skies ⁴⁵².

In this praise-song of Secretary, we read the words 'sea' twice, and in Daodu's songs, the words 'still' and 'tender' are repeated also twice. In addition to the use of striking repetition, the heavy use of similes in those songs makes them lively. All these literary features are parts of Wole Soyinka's aesthetics.

The 'songs of political conflict' make a new category. We read them in *Kongi's Harvest*. We find it interesting to remind that the all play is about the issue of conflict between a traditional ruler against modern system of government. To this respect, the praise-song from *Kongi's Harvest*, especially in the Hemlock section that we have elaborated on above is also a song for political conflict in the sense that it stresses the spiritual authority of the Oba when he annoints the head's pulse centre with the oil sacrifice, as well as his power as God. Unfortunately, Oba Danlola has only the trappings of royalty, since he is in detention after being stripped of his political power by Kongi.

In addition to this, Danlola exhibits his resignation to his loss of power through a song of political conflict, because his oral text is accompanied by drums which sounds now a hollow ring. He says,

My friend, you merely stopped
My drums, but they were silenced
On the day when Kongi cast aside
My props of wisdom, the day he
Drove the old Aweri from their seats ⁴⁵³.

The song above about political conflict is also read in the Hemlock section of *Kongi's Harvest*. The conflict being tradition against modernity in the domain of governing the people, the above song is sung in the camp that defends tradition. To this effect, it is about traditional conflict.

As the action of the play goes on, Oba Sarumi points out at the start of a dirge which is sung traditionally when a King dies. He sings,

They complained because

⁴⁵² Ibid., pp. 88-9.

⁴⁵³ Ibid., p. 63.

The first of the new yams
 Melted first in an Oba's mouth
 But the dead will witness
 We drew the poison from the root ⁴⁵⁴.

As for the song we have just dealt with, this one is also about traditional conflict. It seems very prophetic to the extent that it describes successfully Kongi's personality as a would be political leader. Key to this description which will prove true in the course the action of the play is that Kongi is seen as a leader who is not prepared to risk danger and encounter suffering on the behalf of his people. As a consequence, the song reveals that he personifies the poison in the body of politics. There is a contrast between the qualities Kongi gives to his own political person, we may cite life-giving, harmony, and the reign of terror, sudden and dangerous change in the governance of the land of Isma, disharmony that characterize him. This negativity in the Kongi's leadership leads to the last song of political conflict we have selected. This song is Oba Danlola's final chant of the dirge of ege. It is written as follow,

This is the last
 Our feet shall touch together
 We thought the tune
 Obeyed us to the soul
 But the drums are newly shaped
 And stiff arms strain
 On stubborn crooks, so
 Delve with the left foot
 For ill luck; with the left
 Again for ill-luck; once more
 With the left alone, for disaster
 Is the only certainty we know. ⁴⁵⁵

The essential idea in the above song is that, Oba Danlola, at this stage of the whole action of the play, seemingly accepts the ends of his traditional rule. But he predicts a disastrous end for Kongi's rule.

Let us now deal with 'songs of the passage of life to death'. They are in *The Road* only. This is evident because this play is about the ritual of 'Agemo' which the play itself defines simply as a religious cult of flesh dissolution⁴⁵⁶. In *The Road*, we select two songs that deal with the issue of the passage of life to death. The very first song is the preface poem Alagemo which is presented as follows,

⁴⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 66.

⁴⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 69.

⁴⁵⁶ Wole Soyinka, "The Road", in *Collected Plays I*, op. cit., p. 149.

I heard! I felt their reach
 And heard my naming named.
 The pit it there, the digger fell right through
 My roots have come out in the other world.
 Make away. Agemo's loops
 Are pathways of the sun?
 Rain-reeds, unbend to me, quench
 The burn of cartwheels at my waist!
 Pennant in the stream of time – Now,
 Gone, and Here the Future
 Make way. Let the river woo
 The thinning, thinning Here and
 Vanished Leap that was the Night
 And the split that snatched the heavy-lidded
 She - twin into the Dawn.
 No sweat – beads droop beneath
 The plough – wings of the hawk.
 No bettle finds a hole between Agemo's toes.
 When the whirl wind claps his feet
 It is the sundering of the.... Name of no ills....
 Of....the Not-to-be
 Of the moistening moment of a breadth...
 Approach. Approach and feel
 Did I not speak? Is there not flesh
 Between the dead man's thumbs?⁴⁵⁷

Reading through this song reveals another aspect which is linked to the passage of human life to death; it is the dissolution of the flesh the Professor is negatively determined to know the reality through his search of the Word. Metaphysical concepts as well as a series of vivid images are used in this song. The most important thing in this song is that, it brings out the quest of man for the essence of death, which alone will explain the meaning of life. In addition, it denounces the fact that savage gods are masters of human life. The play is about the road and the accidents that take place in the total unawareness of the travellers whose lives are transformed to death. We may evoke a kind of uncertainty as to the possibility to reach the destination. The first persons concerned by this situation are the characters in play. They are users of the road because they are touts, drivers, thugs, proprietors of lorries, etc.

The second song of the passage of life to death is sung in Yoruba language by one of the layabouts who strums his guitar while Samson is moaning. The song is as follows,

Ona orun jin o eeeee
 Ona orun jin dereba roar
 E e dereba rora
 E e dereba rora

⁴⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 150.

Ona orun jin o eeeee
 Eleda mi ma buru
 Esin baba Bandele je l' odan
 Won o gbefun o
 Eleda mi ma ma buru
 Esin baba Bandele je l' odan
 Won o gbefun o⁴⁵⁸

The translation is as follows,

It's a long long road to heaven
 It's a long road to heaven, Driver
 Go easy a-ah go easy driver
 It's a long long road to heaven
 My creator, be not harsh on me
 Bandele's horse galloped home a winner
 But the race eluded him ⁴⁵⁹.

This song is actually about the passage of life to death. It also adds another dimension, that is heaven. The driver on the road seems himself doomed; he is aware of the unavailability for his life to be transformed to death. In front of such situation, and how long is the road that leads to Heaven, and which he can only take easy, the driver asks to the Creator that He should not be harsh on him because the road to heaven is indeed long. This song reveals the secret of the transitional experience from life to death, and the feelings of existence. Their life is disrupted. The question of their existence is highlighted through this song.

Last but not least, there is the 'war-chant' which is sung by the Thugs. The main concern is 'What he shall experience' in front of the violence of the God Oruesu and the ancestral spirits who always play on their lives. The song is presented as follows,

Eni r' oro ke juba
 Ohun oju ri
 K'o ba de'le a mo'ra
 Ohun oju ri
 Eri r'oro ke juba
 Ohu oju ri
 Ko ba de'le a ru'bo
 Ohun oju ri
 B'e de dele d'ojumo
 Ohun oju ri
 Oruwo re a pitan
 Ohun oju ri
 Eni r'esu ke yago

⁴⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 165.

⁴⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 230.

Ohun oju ri
 Eni s'agberẹf'ẹlegun
 Ohun oju ri⁴⁶⁰

The translation is as follows,

Who meets Oro and makes no obeisance
 What he shall experience!
 When he's home he'll need a hot message
 What he shall experience!
 When he's home he'll make thanksgivings
 What he shall experience!
 And if he fails to make home before dawn.
 What he shall experience!
 His skull shall tell the tales thereof-oh
 What he shall experience!
 Who meets Esu and fails to give way
 What he shall experience!
 Who struts arrogant before ancestral spirits
 What he shall experience!⁴⁶¹

This chant is about war not because it is sung in war-time by the Thugs, but because what they experience when they meet god Oro during a road accident is in no way different from actual war-time experience. The situation is that no one survive after he has met god Oro and the ancestral spirits who fed themselves with human blood alone.

We find it better to deal with the last song which is closed to the one we have just elaborated on. This is not actually about war, but what we find useful is the way and circumstance people meet violent gods and ancestral spirits.

Iri se l'oganjo orun ni ki lo ti je
 Iri se l'oganjo orun ni ki lo S'orun
 Iri erun ta si mi j'ese iku gb'omitan
 Iri erun ta si mi l'aiya otutu eru mu mi
 Iku se ni o' okoni l'aiye lo
 Eba mi kedum, kokolori o...⁴⁶²

The translation is as follows,

It fogged suddenly at noonday
 The sun asked, what is this wonder?
 The sun asked, what is this wonder?
 The dew of drought settled on my feet
 Death deprives us of rain
 The dew of drought settled on my breast

⁴⁶⁰ Wole Soyinka, "The Road", in *Collected Plays I*, p. 171.

⁴⁶¹ Ibid., p. 231.

⁴⁶² Ibid., p. 191.

And the chill of fear took me
 Death has sinned against us
 A man among men is gone ... Kokol'ori ⁴⁶³.

As in the previous song, here we read more about the circumstance in which the characters are surprised by death on the road. This is shown through the image of the sun which surprises the fog suddenly in the noon-day. In addition, the characters are not affected when the dew of drought is settled on their feet, but the chill of fear overtakes when the dew of drought settles on their breast. Death seems to have deprived them of all their blessing.

Reading through all the selected songs used by Wole Soyinka in his plays helps one understand the meanings that the author creates, as they are all linked to the main themes of the plays. These songs of different categories also show that Wole Soyinka successfully does the mixture of genres. He mixes drama with other literary genres, such as poetry, tales, etc. Figures of speech are also used in the songs. The most used are repetitions, similes and metaphors. Our literary sensibility makes us consider all these features as part of Wole Soyinka's aesthetics.

⁴⁶³ Ibid., p. 231.

CHAPTER IV

THEATRICALITY: PROVERBS AND PERFORMANCE

The term ‘‘theatricality’’ resists summary and definition, it has emerged as a leading idea in performance studies both in the United States of America and Germany, with an extensive and rapidly growing literature. It seems clear that the theatricality concept is closely related to performance or performativity.

Theatricality could be the specificity of theatrical language. It distinguishes theatre from other genres, other kinds of spectacle such as dance, performance art, or multimedia art⁴⁶⁴. Forms of narrative fiction that the actor brings to life upon the stage may include fantastical characters, acrobats, mechanized marionettes, monologues, dialogues, representations, ect.

Yoruban proverbs showcase Yoruba oral tradition. Orality is an important element in theater because it is about language in its spoken form as on stage. A sensitive understanding of the plays can be arrived at through the reading of proverbs that contain very rich indications as to the texts in which they are used. Plays are written to be performed. Moreover, theatrical performance is just as deserving of study as dramatic text. Proverbs, as they are used by Wole Soyinka in his plays actually work as one of the languages of drama. In addition, music, dance song, body actions, silence, light, etc are also parts of the language of drama. In this respect, they all can, only be properly understood and acted to in the theatre. The performance of proverbs reveals the fullness and significance of drama⁴⁶⁵.

This chapter provides a framework, description of Yoruba cultural beliefs, if not Africa and the world, through proverbs. The proverbs are arranged in seven themes. Each proverb is presented as it is used in play, followed by a commentary explaining the meaning of the proverbs with the oral tradition. In addition, it gives a concise yet comprehensive overview of proverbs used by Wole Soyinka in his plays, in world culture. It also examines how thinking, speaking, and interacting influence the construction of meaning among characters. The use of proverbs by Wole Soyinka is as a discursive tool in the plays.

⁴⁶⁴ Josette F  ral and Ronald P. Bermingham, ‘‘Theatricality: The Specificity of Theatrical Language’’, in *Substance*, Vol. 31, No. 2 / 3, Issue 98 / 99: Special Issue: Theatricality (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 2002), pp. 94-108.

⁴⁶⁵ Jonathan Culpeper et al (ed.), *Exploring the Language of Drama: From Text to Context* (London: Routledge, 1998), p. 6.

IV-1-PROVERBS AND CONTEXTS.

The main concern of this section is to elaborate a bit more on proverbs in the contexts of performance, pragmatics, and semantics.

IV-1-1- Proverbs in the Context of Performance.

Proverbs are parts of oral literature used by African writers to re-educate Europeans on the aesthetics of traditional African literature that was invoked before European invasion in Africa. Na' Allah explains that,

Traditional Africa was a basically oral society. Our history, science, medicine, technology, philosophy and literature forms were passed through the words of mouths in myths, folktales, legends, proverbs, praise poetry and rituals performances (The Egyptian hieroglyphics which was pointed to as a pioneer of written culture in the world was a minority in Africa and could not be cited to represent the dense culture of orature in all other part of the continent)⁴⁶⁶.

However, this explanation can be completed by Chinweizu, when he writes:

...some parts of Africa had written literature long before many parts of Western Europe. Long before Ceasar led his Roman legions to bring civilisation to barbarian Gaul, to Celtic Britain, (...) the African Nile valley civilisation of Pharaohnic Egypt, Nubia, and Ethiopia had literate cultures - in territories where Sudan, Ethiopia and Egypt are today located ⁴⁶⁷.

Proverbs are actually one of the forms of oral literature which serve as antecedents of modern day prose fiction. These traditional oral narrative forms influenced early Nigerian writers as they attempted to represent their African experience through the novel, poetry and drama. Proverbs as traditional oral narrative forms are wise sayings that address the heart of the discourse in any given context, truthfully and objectively.

In addition, Cyprien Ekwensi considers:

The African writer must look to his own heritage. Then he must look around at what is available to him. If he decides to adapt existing forms to suit his need, he can still bring

⁴⁶⁶ Na' Allah A, (2003) 'Oral Literary Traditions in Africa'. In Olu, O. & Charles B. (Eds.) *Criticism, Theory and Ideology in African Literature*. Ilorin : Haytee Press & Publishing Company Ltd. Pp100-116. P101.

⁴⁶⁷ Chinweizu, O., Onwuchekwa, J. & Madubudike. 1. (1980), *Towards the Decolonization of African Literature*. Enugu : Fourth Dimension Publications, P26.

to those forms trends of identity and distinction which will give him a place in forms known and accepted by the world at large.⁴⁶⁸

The ideas expressed in the above quotations are shared by Joel Adedeji who, in his 'Oral Tradition and the contemporary Theatre in Nigeria' provides a working definition of oral tradition which details the purpose and mode of acquiring this verbal act. He suggests that oral tradition is a 'complex corpus of verbal or spoken art created as means of recalling the past'. For him, it is 'based on the ideas, beliefs, symbols, assumptions, attitudes and sentiments of peoples' and the mode of acquisition is 'through a process of learning or initiation and its purpose is to condition social action and foster social interaction'.⁴⁶⁹ The typology of oral tradition enumerated by Adedeji recognises two main categories, namely, literary and historical.⁴⁷⁰ In his classification, the literary category includes poetic genres such as oriki or praise and totem chants, odu or Ifa divination poems and songs. The literary category includes formulae like parables, incantations and proverbs. The historical category includes such forms as narratives based on myths, legends and historical lays like the epic. A similar classification is made by Harold Scheub in his article 'Review of African Oral Traditions and Literature', where he gives the major divisions of oral traditions as 'the riddle and lyric poems; the proverb; and the tale, heroic and epic'.⁴⁷¹

The influence which the various elements of oral traditions exert on modern African writing especially drama, is indeed tremendous. In fact, major African literary texts indicates attachment to the African cosmic setting. This is the setting which Mazisi Kunene describes as the primary basis of all literatures.⁴⁷² Part of the reason why many African writers borrow from the stock of oral traditions can be attributed to the writers' recognition of the functions which verbal art forms perform in the society. For instance, William Bascom believes that verbal art forms such as myths and legends 'contain detailed descriptions of sacred ritual, the codified belief or dogma of the

⁴⁶⁸ Cyprian Ekwensi, 'The Dilemma of the African Writer', *West African Review*. 27 (1958): pp.701-2.

⁴⁶⁹ Joel Adedeji, 'Oral Tradition and the Contemporary Theatre in Nigeria'. *Research in African Literature*. 2.2 (1971): p. 134.

⁴⁷⁰ Joel Adedeji, op. cit., p. 136.

⁴⁷¹ Harold Scheub, 'Review of African Oral Traditions and Literature'. *The African Studies Review*. 28. 2/3 (June/ September, 1985).

⁴⁷² See Mazisi Kunene, 'The Relevanve of African Cosmological Systems to African Literature Today', *African Literature Today*, 11 (1980): p.200.

religious system of the people'.⁴⁷³ A.H. Gayton amplifies this idea in his 'Perspectives in Folklore' when he argues that the mythological system of the people is often their educational system and that the children who sit listening to evening's tale under the bright moonlight are imbibing traditional knowledge and attitudes.⁴⁷⁴ In a study of education among the Chaga of East Africa, Raum also observes that the intrinsic value of proverbs to the people lies in two qualities. They are regarded as 'inheritance from their ancestors incorporating the experience of the tribe, and they serve as instruments both for self control and for the control of others'.⁴⁷⁵

The concepts oral tradition and oral literature can be used interchangeably because they refer to the same oral narrative forms. In his 'Written Tradition, Oral Tradition, Oral Literature, Fiuriture', Flora Devatine translated by Kareva Mateata-Allain, writes that, 'traditionally, orality characterises a human society that does not write and that has no recourse for transmitting cultural traditions, or inscribing the reflections, thoughts, and emotions of its members. Further, each of the members of such society is responsible for perpetuating orality and its memory. From this point of view, orality is the restitution of memory transmitted through diverse expressions of voice or words of culture. Similar to reproduction by language, sounds and images are transported through a particular level of creation and expression'.⁴⁷⁶

Wole Soyinka is significantly influenced by African oral traditions. Like other African writers, he borrows the rich African verbal art forms to create new visions of life and new dramatic and poetic idioms with remarkable originality. These borrowings occur in the form of imaginative use of African traditional symbols, images, myths, proverbs and other traditional stylistic devices. In Africa, and in Nigerian cultures especially, they are considered the reliable horses, which convey meanings to their destinations or hearts of the listeners.

In his 'Wole Soyinka and the Horses of Speech', Bernth Lindfors writes that the Yoruba have a saying that 'proverbs are the horses of speech; if communication is

⁴⁷³ William Bascom, 'Four Functions of Folklore', *Journal of American Folklore*, 67, 226 (1954): p. 335.

⁴⁷⁴ A.H. Gayton, 'Perspectives in Folklore', *Journal of American Folklore*, 64 (1951): 149.

⁴⁷⁵ O.F. Raum, *Chaga Childhood: A Description of Indigenous Education in East African Tribe* (London: Oxford University Press, 1940): p. 214.

⁴⁷⁶ Flora Devatine, 'Written Tradition, Oral Tradition, Oral Literature, Fiuriture', translated by Kareka Mateata-Allain, Online. <http://shimajournal.org/issues/v3n2/d.-Devantine-Shima-v3n2-10-14.pdf>

lost, we use proverbs to find it.’’⁴⁷⁷ In actual practice, of course, the Yoruba, like any other people, command a whole repertoire of proverbs, and use them to serve a variety of rhetorical purposes. Proverbs are employed not only to retrieve communication gone out of the right path but also to speed it up, slow it down, convey weighty messages, deliver lighthearted jests, sharpen arguments, blunt criticism, clarify difficult ideas, and disguise simple ones beyond easy recognition. The same proverb, in fact, can be an ordinary beast of burden or a rare racing thoroughbred, depending on its use – and user. The real master of proverb is one who is able to summon the entire cavalry at will and make them spontaneously perform precisely those tricks he has in mind. To do this, he must be in complete control of their movements at all times, harnessing their versatile energies with such skill that they cannot bolt off in directions he did not intend. He must be an expert wrangler with words.

Wole Soyinka, Nigeria’s most talented playwright is one of these. No other African writer – excerpt possibly Chinua Achebe or D. O. Fagunwa – has displayed so much agility in manipulating traditional verbal formulae. Of course, Achebe and Fagunwa write prose fiction, a pliant kind of literature which affords them the opportunity to insert proverbs into narration as well as dialogue. Soyinka, as a dramatist, must put all his words into the mouths of his characters; he can never speak in his own voice or in the guise of an omniscient chronicler. Yet even this formal limitation does not prevent him from getting more literary mileage out of African oral art than any other writer on the continent.

Indeed, the limitation may actually work to his advantage, since it forces him to employ proverbs and other forms of fixed-phrase folklore in situations where they are dynamic human interaction in which formulaic sayings are expected to have some influence on the course of subsequent events. Soyinka returns folklore to the folk, and in so doing, enriches his theatrical art immeasurably.

Furthermore, proverbial expressions and wise sayings being one of the integral strong-holds of the traditional African poetry, they are still of great significance in the present day African society. These expressions are used to instruct, teach and correct the younger generations. In Africa, especially in Nigerian context, expressions are not considered rich and intelligent excerpt when they are duly laced with proverbs which are many in African cultures.

⁴⁷⁷James Gibbs and Bernth Linford (Ed.), *Research on Wole Soyinka*, op. cit., p. 25.

To this effect, it seems clear that proverbs are expressions of wisdom. This informs why a traditional African would constantly punctuate his speech with appropriate proverbs to drive his points home.⁴⁷⁸ This ability to sum up ideas and experiences in captivating expressions has always been considered a sign of native intelligence, linguistic competence and cultural erudition.

In addition we categorize proverbs as follows: proverbs expressing a general attitude towards life and the laws that govern life, ethnical proverbs recommending certain virtues and condemning certain vices, proverbs expressing a system of values, proverbs expressing general truths and observations about life and human nature, humorous proverbs, and miscellaneous proverbs⁴⁷⁹. This categorization works with the forms or patterns of proverbs presented as opposite parallel, similar parallel, single statement, statement with an explanation, comparison, descriptive list, ‘if...then’ conditional statement and ‘or else’ instruction⁴⁸⁰.

Furthermore, as a conceptual review of proverbs, they are common features of conversational eloquence in many African cultures, especially in Nigeria. Such ‘wise sayings’ are usually acquired and learnt from listening to the elders’ talk. It is obvious that the elders are repository of communal wisdom in various African traditions. They are the masters of eloquence, rhetoric and meaning. They are also the ones who know how to impregnate short expressions with vast meanings, implicating the proverb, ‘it is the elders’ mouth that determines a ripe kola nut’⁴⁸¹.

Several definitions of the term ‘proverb’ abound in literature. The central idea in the definitions is that a proverb is ‘an adage, saying, maxim, precept, saw or any synonym of such that expresses conventional truth’. According to *Webster’s New Universal Unabridged Dictionary*, a proverb is ‘a short saying in common use expressing a well-known truth or common fact ascertained by experience’⁴⁸². It is our contention, based on above definitions, that a proverb is any wise saying that addresses

⁴⁷⁸ R. A. Lawal, et al. ‘A Pragmatic Study of Selected Pairs of Yoruba Proverbs’ in *Journal of Pragmatics*, 1997 ; 27 (1): 635-652, p.637.

⁴⁷⁹ Damaria L. Eugenio, ‘Words of Wisdom’, http://www.answers.com/Q/What_is_the_six_classification_of_proverbs. (March 2015).

⁴⁸⁰ ‘Kinds of Proverbs’, <http://www.biblecity.org/kindsofproverbs>. (March 2015).

⁴⁸¹ ‘International Journal of Research in Humanities, Arts And Literature’, Vol. 1, Issues 6, Nov. 2013, 47-58.

<https://www.unilorin.edu.ng/publications/ADEDIMEJI/SEMANTICS&PRAGMATIC.htm>. (March 2015).

⁴⁸² *Webster’s New Universal Unabridged Dictionary* (Deluxe /2nd ed., New York : Dorst and Baber, 1972).

the heart of the matter in a given context, truthfully and objectively, and is ascertained by world knowledge. *The Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* writes that a proverb is a ‘‘popular short saying, with words of advice or warning’’.⁴⁸³

IV-1-2- Proverbs at Levels of Semantics and Pragmatics.

As a theoretical background, we write that, language is one of the main instruments by which values, belief systems and cultural practices are communicated. Every language asserts Goddard, has its own culture-specific meanings, which do not translate readily into English⁴⁸⁴. For this purpose, the Nigerian writers in English have to deploy theories of meaning to their rendering of Yoruba proverbs into English and have to rely on this to get their meanings communicated.

This subsection is devoted to the study of proverbs at the levels of semantics and pragmatics. As semantics is a linguistic theory concerned with the study of meaning by seeking ‘‘to convey and classify human experience through language’’⁴⁸⁵ and pragmatics studies the ‘‘‘invisible’ meaning or how we recognize what is meant even when it is not actually said (or written)’’⁴⁸⁶, the essence of the theories of meaning is to provide frameworks from which can be attributed and inferred. Some of the theory of words and sentences meaning include the referential theory, the ideational theory, the realist theory, the contextual theory, etc.

The referential theory states that the meaning of a linguistic expression is expressed in terms of what is named, denoted and referred to by the words. Also considered as the denotation theory, it indicates that the meaning of a word or expression is the physical object which the word stands for.

The ideational theory, otherwise known as the psychological theory refers to the meaning of a word being associated with the idea always associated with that word or linguistic expression. In other words, the theory states that if an occasion instantiates the occurrence of a word, the idea expressed is the meaning of that word. It is a

⁴⁸³ A.S. Hornby et al, *The Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* (Second Edition, London : Oxford University Press, 1963).

⁴⁸⁴ C. Goddard, *Semantic Analysis* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p.2.

⁴⁸⁵ S.T. Babatunde, ‘‘Towards Defining the Scope of Meaning in ESL in Nigeria’’ in Adegbiya, E. (Ed.) *The English Language and Literature in English* (Ilorin: Dept of M.E.L., Unilorin), 70.

⁴⁸⁶ G. Yule, *A Study of Language*, 2nd ed., (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1996a), p.127.

mentalistic theory of meaning. While referential theory principally deals with denotation, the ideational theory is chiefly concerned with connotation.

The realist theory of meaning, an outgrowth of the referential theory is attributed chiefly to Plato and Aristotle. It simply states that, for a word to have a meaning, it must refer to some existing or subsisting entity. Therefore, words are not more than ‘‘exaggerated theory of reference’’ as posited by Frege. It is proposed that there is an entity above and beyond the realm of sensible entities from which all particular things derive their meanings.

The contextual theory, on the last note here is a practical theory of meaning which focuses on what the linguistic form is used for, rather than what it means.⁴⁸⁷ According to Firth who is a proponent of this theory, the most vital fact about language is its social function. Essentially, the theory maintains that a word/sentence will be meaningful only if it is used appropriately in some actual contexts.⁴⁸⁸

Moreover, as meaning cannot be a one dimensional phenomenon, there are bound to be types of meanings. Leech⁴⁸⁹ identifies seven types of meaning so as to really delineate the nature of the elusive meaning. According to him, meanings are conceptual/denotative, emotional/connotative, collocative, reflected, affective, stylistic and thematic. As all these meaning types feature in proverbs, a brief discussion of them is deemed appropriate.

Denotative meaning is the literal, basic, plain or central meaning of a word. It is relatively stable and its scope is not open-ended and indeterminate. Connotative meaning, on the other hand is the meaning people associate with words. It is the personal or cultural meaning which is open-ended and indeterminate. According to Odebunmi, connotative meaning ultimately depends on ‘‘individual experience’’⁴⁹⁰ and Yule affirms the essence of ‘‘speaker meaning’’.⁴⁹¹

While collocative (from collocation or ‘‘placing together’’ of words or phrases) meaning is the meaning of a linguistic form in relation to the other forms expressed with it in a given context. Reflected meaning is the sense a word or sentence evokes

⁴⁸⁷ O. A. Oyeshile, ‘‘Philosophy and Language: the Nature of the Philosopher’s Interest in Language’’ in Babajide, A.O. (Ed.) *Studies in English Language* (Ibadan: Enicrownfit Publishers, 2000), p. 176.

⁴⁸⁸ A. Ogunsili, ‘‘Introductory Semantics’’ in Babajide, A.O. (Ed.) *Studies in English Language* (Ibadan: Enicrownfit Publishers, 2000), P.48.

⁴⁸⁹ G.N. Leech, *Semantics* (London: Penguin Books, 1974), n. p.

⁴⁹⁰ A. Odebunmi, *The English Word and Meaning* (Ogbomosho : Critical Sphere, 2001), p. 49.

⁴⁹¹ G. Yule, *Pragmatics* (Oxford : Oxford University Press, 1996b), p.3.

in a multiple conceptual situation. In the words of Ogunsiji⁴⁹², reflected meaning arises when one of the several meanings of a word becomes directly associated with the word to the extent that we tend to forget the other uses of the word.

Affective meaning arises when language is used to reflect the personal feeling or attitudes of the speaker to the audience. This type of meaning features at the levels of politeness, indignation and rudeness. While stylistic meaning concerns the relation of the linguistic form to social or situational circumstances like geographical location, subject-matter, medium, sex, age, etc. Thematic meaning refers to the manner of organizing messages in terms of ordering, focus and emphasis.

As no language is monolithic and expressions lend themselves to various meanings based on the interpretation of the listeners, stamping one specific meaning on a proverb may be erroneous. What we have, rather, are possible meaning types which cannot even all be explored. The inter-relationship and inter-dependence of meanings, occasioning overlaps thus feature in our analysis.

The data to analyze are selected from the proverbs contained in *A Dance of the Forests*, *The Swamp Dwellers*, *The Lion and the Jewel*, *Kongi's Harvest*, and *The Trials of Brother Jero* by Wole Soyinka. These five of the seven plays that constitute the corpus of my doctoral dissertation are committed to the Nigerian cultures; however, they contain also features of European, American and Asian cultures.

A Dance of the Forests portrays the celebration of feast: "the gathering of the tribes"⁴⁹³ including the living people, the dead people, the supernatural beings, the half child, the unborn, etc. Participants to the feast belong to different and opposed worlds, generations, etc. ensuing conflicts leading to the birth of the Half Child, the death of Oremole who was pushed down from a tree by Demoke, the protagonist, and the struggle between Ogun and Eshuoro.

In *The Swamp Dwellers* the tragedy is attributable to fate, the gods, oil exploration and filial rivalry and subordination. Fate takes the form of flood, which destroys the crops and ensures famine and poverty. This, with the sand flies, reflects the natural inclemency of the region's geography, the infertility of the alluvial soils and the attendant endemic hunger. The swamp dwellers are enjoined by the representative custodian of tradition (the local priest of the serpent deity of the land) Kadiye, to make

⁴⁹² A. Ogunsiji, Op. Cit., p.52.

⁴⁹³ Wole Soyinka, "A Dance of the Forests" in *Collected Plays 1*, op. cit., p. 5.

ritual sacrifices and remain loyal to the gods. The priesthood here, especially in its indifference and opulence in the midst of suffering, symbolically represents the Nigerian leadership. As Federal Government, it carries out the opiate role of preaching more and more sacrifice in the face of the political and economic exploitation of the swamp dwellers. But Igwezu, the hero of *The Swamp Dwellers* rejects both his tragic destiny and the recommended remedy. He, in effect, temporarily takes the ruler hostage. He sees sacrifice as futile if it lacks initiative, if it lacks a clearly-understood philosophy. A fruitful sacrifice is that in which what is to be gained exceeds what is sacrificed.

The Lion and the Jewel tackles a popular theme in African literature, the conflict between modernization and maintaining tradition. Largely depriving the schoolteacher Lakunle's character of depth or interest, Soyinka constructs him as aloof (there is clear symbolism in the fact that his modern suit does not properly fit him) and pompous. This is one of the best-known plays by Africa's major dramatist, Wole Soyinka. It is set in the Yoruba village of Ilunjinle. The main characters are Sidi (the jewel), 'a true village belle' and Baroka (the lion), the crafty and powerful Bale of the village, Lakunle, the young teacher, influenced by western ways, and Sadiku, the eldest of Baroka's wives. How the Lion hunts the Jewel is the theme of this ribald comedy. It centers on three main characters. Baroka, the "Bale" (village chief) of Ilunjinle, is the "lion" in the play. He is a sly, sixty-two years old man, who feigns impotence to seduce Sidi, the village belle. Sidi, a conceited young girl, is the "jewel" in the play. She is courted by Lakunle, a teacher, who strongly believes in western culture and ideas. To seduce Sidi, Baroka flatters her, extols her beauty, and befuddles her with romantic words, profuse riddles and proverbs. The victory of Baroka over Lakunle who should have married Sidi, but fails to do so because he does not want to pay the bride price, can be regarded as the triumph of Yoruba traditional values over western influence and ideas. Some people can also regard it as the victory of old age experience over youth.

Kongi's Harvest deals with the demented dictator of the state of Isma who has imprisoned and dethroned the traditional chief, Oba Danlola. To legitimize his seizure of power, Kongi has laid claim to the Oba's spiritual authority through his consecration of the crops at the New Yam Festival. This play is relevant to my topic since it tackles the abuses of power by Nigerian leaders, Nigeria being a newly independent country.

The Trials of Brother Jero is a lighthearted satirical comedy based on the activities of wrong beach prophet, Jero, Brother Jero, who describes his approach to his “trade” from the very beginning of the play. Chume is the classic victim of the prophet. In *The Trials of Brother Jero*, the social problems of the society is not just religious hypocrisy which is prominent in the play but also moral decadence, where martial imbalance is also embedded in the text to signify the total domestic disorder of the Nigerian society.

The five literary works mainly highlight the significance accorded to cultural norms and nuances in the day-to-day activities of the Nigerian setting that is the yorubaland. The proverbs are one group, representing the works of Wole Soyinka, comprising sixty proverbs. To better achieve our purpose in this subsection devoted to the study of proverbs, we first of all present them accordingly to the play they read in. Then, we group them in a number of ways, forms or patterns according as they are opposite parallel, similar parallel, statement with an explanation, comparison, descriptive list, “if...then” conditional statement and “or...else” instruction. To avoid interrupting the reading of the whole dissertation, proverbs presentation and patterns are placed at the end in the annex section. Last but not least, we analyse the proverbs. In the presentation, categorization, and in the analysis as well, proverbs of the same forms, and categories from the same play or from different plays will be presented, and analysed within one section.

IV-2- PLAYING WITH PROVERBS.

The analysis of proverbs consists, first all, in situating each of them within the semantic theories that they belong and the types of meaning that can be attributed to it. Secondly, the broad analysis is subsequently undertaken with a view to interpreting or explicating the visible and the invisible sense of the proverbs, their semantics and pragmatics. The proverbs selected, presented and categorized in the two annexes deal with the following themes and sub themes: past, present and future; on going conflict of values; rejection of modern technique; power and wealth; Eurocentric worldview; Afrocentric worldview; mediation of conflict; and religious hypocrisy. We will be describing one by one the proverbs listed in the annexes, indicating that their semantic fields are specific. Each proverb has its own semantic world. The description will be

done numerically accordingly with the corresponding annexes placed at the end of the dissertation.

IV-2-1- Proverbs and Temporality.

To begin with, proverb (1) that is ‘Proverb to bones and silence’, ‘Proverb to living and silence’, these statements are not really proverbs as the others we list altogether; they all integrate the issue of conflict between past, present and future. We are going to reveal the extent to which these two statements are associated with past, present and future.

In his article ‘Wole Soyinka and the Horses of Speech’⁴⁹⁴, Bernth Lindford writes that ‘Proverbs to bones and silence’ and ‘Oracle to living and silence’ are lines that follow Agboreko’s ponderous proverbs every times he opens his mouth.⁴⁹⁵ In addition to this judgement of value, he writes that, take characterization for example, the personality of Wole Soyinka’s characters are often very clearly defined by the proverbs they use. In this sense Bernth Lindford thinks that Agboreko’s ‘Proverbs to bones and silence’ and ‘Oracle to living and silence’ work in such a way as to reinforce the definition of his own personality every times he mentions them. Bernth Lindford adds that these statements are identified as words of traditional wisdom.

In addition to this, he adds that ‘the trouble with Agboreko’s sayings is that they contribute little or nothing to any conversation he enters because they bear only the most oblique relation to the matters under discussion. He appears to be citing proverbs merely for the sake of expressing others with his erudition, not for the sake of improving communication. To Agboreko, conventional form is obviously much more important than significant content.

Bernth Lindford’s interpretation of Agboreko’s ‘Proverbs to bones and silence’, and ‘Oracle to living and silence’ is a limited one because he only takes into account the level of characterization. We find that, at the levels of semantics and stylistics, these statements are keys to understand Agboreko’s refusal of change for the better of the all community, which means also the conflict between past that he represents, present and future.

⁴⁹⁴ James Gibbs and Bernth Linford (Ed.), *Research on Wole Soyinka*, op. cit., p. 25.

⁴⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 26.

In fact, ‘Proverbs to bones and silence’ and ‘Oracle to living and silence’ are tags, not to confuse with question tags in Grammar, that *The Advanced Learner’s Dictionary of Current English* define as phrases or sentences often quoted: Latin tag.⁴⁹⁶ From this short but sound definition, especially, its evocation of Latin tag, we raise the equivoque to precise that we do not mean Latin phrases or other expression in English used intentionally or otherwise as mark of education, such as *add hoc*, *quorum*, *sine die* in administration, *ibid*, *op. cit.* (opus citatum, the work quoted or opera citatum, in the work quoted) as academic footnotes, *quo*, *sine qua non* some of those passed into the language at large, *a.m*, *p.m*, *e.g*, *i.e*, *c*, *cf*, as abbreviations, notes and references,⁴⁹⁷ *A mari usque ad mare* (from sea to sea) as Canada’s national motto, *Velut arbor aeo* (I grow as a tree) used as motto for the University of Toronto. Both these mottos were created long after English had become the language of academia, but the use of Latin confers a mark of erudition, ceremonious, and prestige. Latin rules help to maintain the culture of elitism.⁴⁹⁸

When we consider Agboreko’s ‘Proverbs to bones and silence’ and ‘Oracle to living and silence’ as tags in the manner of Latin tags, we refer to Andrea Di Giovanni’s article entitled ‘Sic Transit Gloria Mundi: Gloria Thruw Up on Monday? (Or, Latin Awareness Since 1800)’. In this article, the author cites that today, Latin remains a ‘powerful underground river flowing everywhere beneath modern English.’⁴⁹⁹ He discusses two areas of intersection between English and Latin since 1800: its impact on science and medicine, and the characteristics of Latin tags, short phrases used in elevated discourse that are recognized as Latin even if their meanings are not now known. Both of these areas are affected by Latin’s reputation as a ‘‘learned’’ language. In addition, the English vernacular still required additional regulation at the beginning of the nineteenth century, its borrowings and constructions from other languages, especially Latin, allowed English to function in literary, legal, commercial and scientific forums.

To this effect, we understand that the influence of Latin on English has subsided, and English speakers tend to resort to Latin more often than they are initially aware.

⁴⁹⁶ A.S. Hornby et all, *Advanced Learner’s Dictionary of Current English*, op. cit.

⁴⁹⁷ *Concise Oxford Companion to the English Language*, London : Oxford University Press 1998.
<http://www.answers.com/topic/latin-tag>. (March 2015).

⁴⁹⁸ Andrea Di Giovanni, <http://homes.chass.utoronto.ca/~cpercy/courses/6362DiGiovanni2.htm> (March 2015).

⁴⁹⁹ *Ibid.* n.p. <http://homes.chass.utoronto.ca/~cpercy/courses/6362DiGiovanni2.htm> (March 2015).

Thus, Latin continues to affect the lives of English speakers, sometimes very unconsciously, as people interject stock Latin phrases into their speech, generating the impression of erudition. The English language owes so much to the influence of Latin. Perhaps Latin persists as an influence on English because it serves as a link to great traditions long past, lending to English the stamp of prestige associated with illustrious ancestral roots. Lamey believes that the ‘primary appeal of studying Latin today may be in how well it helps us understand our own language.’ While the English language is now secure enough in its own right, the use of expressions such as *curriculum vitae*, emphasizes that, to some extent, Latin continues to influence and illuminate the English of the twenty-first century.

The essential ideas in the above discussion of Andrea Di Giviano on the two areas of intersection between English and Latin since 1800 are, first of all, its impact on science, and the characteristics of Latin tags, short phrases used in elevated discourse. Secondly, Latin allows English to function in literature and other disciplines as well. Thirdly, Latin helps us to understand our own languages. And it also helps to maintain the culture of elitism. Last not least, Lamey emphasizes that, to some extent, Latin continues to influence and illuminate the English of the twenty-first century.⁵⁰⁰

In this regards, we understand that in the relation of Latin and the English language, Latin tags play the role of maintaining that relationship. In the line representing time, Latin is associated with the past, and the English language using Latin tags positively, represents the present, and the future is viewed and imagined with Latin continual positive influence on the English language.

Furthermore, Wole Soyinka through the character Agboreko, and especially his ‘Proverbs to bones and silence’ and ‘Oracle to living and silence’, which are also tags in the model of Latin tags, promotes the revalidation of the past after its examination; this helps to destroy all the evils and futilities. This step guarantees the reconstruction of a better present so clamoured by the masses. The problem is to know if Agboreko himself masters the meaning and function of his ‘Proverbs to bones and silence’ and ‘Oracle to living and silence’, which we summarise in the following terms: self-examination at the Gathering of the Tribes. He might know them because he evoke the essential ideas with his ‘Oracle’; but Agboreko might ignore the eventual and probable

⁵⁰⁰ Ibid. np. <http://homes.chass.utoronto.ca/~cpercy/courses/6362DiGiovanni2.htm> (March 2015).

coming of Dead Man and Dead Woman to the Gathering of the Tribes to confront them for past crimes.

In addition, these two utterances, tags, are placed in time between the present and the past. They also project the future.

To begin with the first tag, 'Proverbs to bones and silence', this phrase is made up of two important words: 'bones' and 'silence'. The word 'bones' means hard parts of skeleton of a vertebrate.⁵⁰¹ This word refers to men, dead or alive. The other word is 'silence' which means the condition of being quiet or silent; absence of sound; the condition of not speaking, answering (question, spoken or written) or making comment. It is the period of saying nothing.⁵⁰²

The second Agboreko's tag is 'Oracle to living and silence'. In this phrase, there are three important words: 'Oracle', 'living' and 'silence'. The first word 'Oracle', (in ancient Greece) means answer given at a place where questions about the future were asked of the gods; priest (ess) giving the answers. As far as the word 'living' is concerned, it is associated with the means of keeping alive, of earning what is needed for life.⁵⁰³ The word 'living' also means the manner of life. As for the word 'silence', it is used in both tags, to place an emphasis on this condition during the transition between the past and the present, the future not being excluded.

In addition, Agboreko's 'Proverbs to bones and silence' and 'Oracle to living and silence' are part of Wole Soyinka's *A Dance of the Forests*. This play was performed in 1960 for the independence celebrations for Nigeria. It was about the Nigerian situation. Thought for that occasion, it represents the acceptance of changing conditions by the people. In giving reasons, Soyinka says, "The euphoria should be tempered by the reality of the eternal history of oppression".⁵⁰⁴ According to *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, *A Dance of the Forests* satirizes the fledgling nation by stripping it of romantic legend and by showing that the present is no more a golden age than is the past".⁵⁰⁵

As a direct comment on it, Michael Etherton says:

A Dance of the Forests is Soyinka's first major play within the

⁵⁰¹ A.S. Hornby et al, *The Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*, op. cit.

⁵⁰² Ibid. .

⁵⁰³ Ibid..

⁵⁰⁴ Gibbs James, *Wole Soyinka* (New York: Macmillan, 1986), P.63.

⁵⁰⁵ *Encyclopaedia Britannica* Vol. IX (London: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1962), P.391.

play the gathering of the tribes feast, symbolic of Nigeria's independence celebrations requires the presence of the industrious ancestors from the past.⁵⁰⁶

This citations work in such a way as to clarify our opinion of Agboreko's 'Proverbs to bones and silence' and 'Oracle to living and silence', that is to say, the Gathering of the tribes is the appropriate occasion for all the Nigerians to self-examine by asking and answering questions about the past, the present and the future as well. The 'Gathering of the tribes' is actually an 'Oracle', as Sole Soyinka wishes it through his character, Agboreko in his tag 'Oracle to living and silence'.

The phrase 'Proverbs to bones and silence' and 'Bones and Silence' simply have also been used by other writers in fictitious situations which are helpful in our attempt to gain a better understanding of their meaning in the context Agboreko uses it in his tag, together with his 'Oracle to living and silence'.

In fact, the first story is related to the way the author has participated in the record of 'Not I Bird Songs'.⁵⁰⁷ Some of these songs were composed back in the days when they used to play side by side in their 'Garden at Night'. One rainy night of April, they were supposed to go to his apartment in order to drop his radiocity amp, and then go party, but he decided to stay home because he was mighty exhausted. In the middle of the night, fire broke out next floor of the tenement. When the smoke woke him up, his amp and guitar were already on fire next door. He tried to save them but he could not. In fact, he scarcely managed to escape. He was in shock for several weeks and he moved back to his parents' house in the open country, where he remained idle for a long time. That fire scene occurred four years ago and they have met only occasionally since then.

In January 2001, the author of this text suggested they record some of the 'Gardening at Night' material plus some songs he had composed since on his terrible, dreadful new guitar, which actually sounds so awful that there is not even a trademark printed on it. The author borrowed a great amp and struggled for obtaining somehow a decent sound.

⁵⁰⁶ Etherton Michael, *The Development of African Drama* (London: Hutchinson University Library for Africa, 1982), 257.

⁵⁰⁷ http://onlyangels.free.fr/reviews/n/not_i_bird/proverbs_of_bones_and_silence.htm (March 2015).

To start this '*Proverb to bone and silence*' (my italics), they recorded a slowed down version of his catchy yet worried song 'None of These Days'. The album's title is immediately echoed in some parts of his former stand-out song's lyrics. In this story, the phrase 'Proverbs to bone and Silence' conveys the idea of the difficulties that accompanied their decision of making new beginning with the record of 'Not I Bird Songs'.

The second story is from Reginald Hill's⁵⁰⁸ criminal novel entitled *Bones and Silence*. In fact, after a night on the town, Superintendent Andy Dalziel witnesses a shooting in the house across the way from his kitchen window. He is sure what he saw was murder. A beautiful woman was trying to commit suicide by shooting herself in the face. Dalziel and his suspect are cast in a cathedral mystery play as God and the devil, respectively. A young missing husband, heroin in the autopsy, changes in testimony of a drunken policeman, and the two surviving occupants of the house – the husband and lover of the deceased victim – both insist she was killed accidentally while they were trying to prevent her suicide. Then one of them disappears.

Last but not least, 'Bone and Silence' by Gerald Fleming⁵⁰⁹ writes that 'Bones feels entitled to speak to Silence. There are prerequisites: proper depth, aridity, desiccation, balance, density, and a kind of confidence. No loam: say salt, say dust, say southwest. And when the conversation occurs it is understood on Bone's part what to expect from Silence, so one could say that expectations were low, but such is a pattern of our thinking, and in this case the entire dry dialectic is different. There is a moon shining, unknown to Bone, intimate with Silence. We know better about Bone and Silence – need only look inside us.

Proverb (3) is 'No sensible man can burn the house to cook a little yam'⁵¹⁰. This proverb addresses men's attitude and responsibility in time of taking decisions. This proverb means people should not try to solve a minor problem by taking action that will cause much greater harm. 'To cook a little yam', a 'sensible man' cannot 'burn the house'. The literal meaning is that, to cook a little yam, a sensible man needs only a little fire. The word 'sensible' means, having or showing good sense.⁵¹¹

⁵⁰⁸ Reginald Hill, *Bones and Silence*. <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0174573/> (March 2015).

⁵⁰⁹ Gerald Fleming, 'Bone and Silence'. <http://www.poets.org/viewmedia.php/prmMID/22257> (March 2015).

⁵¹⁰ Wole Soyinka, 'A Dance of the Forests' in *Collected Plays 1*, op. cit., p.29.

⁵¹¹ A.S. Hornby et al, *The Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*, op. cit.

This proverb actually works in a manner that it advises the person it is said to. It is indeed a wise saying which sounds evident to anyone this proverb is addressed to. Such a wise saying expresses a kind of general truth.

But, in the context of *A Dance of the Forests*, the use of this proverb by Old Man shows a gap, a real distance, and an opposition to and with the situation that Wole Soyinka depicts. We mean that Old Man who is supposed to be wise, makes a very wrong use of this proverb in regard to the context of the play. In fact, a ‘sensible man’ is actually Old Man himself. ‘Burn’ in the proverb is identified to his action of pouring petrol and its smell. ‘The house’ in the proverb stands for the forest. ‘To cook little yam’ in the proverb means Old Man’s action of driving the dead pair away.

The action of the play is presented as it follows:

Adenebi: I don’t understand. I thought we left it all to you.

Old Man: Ah, petrol. You, get me one of the councillors.

[The man goes.] I have just remembered. They cannot stand the smell of petrol. [The councillor enters.] Get some petrol. Pour it over the forest. They cannot stand the smell.

Councillor: Baba, don’t you think that...

Old Man: Now what am I thinking of? I must be getting tired. *No sensible man burns the house to cook a little yam.* I know what I want. (my italics) Remember the old decrepit wagon we put off the road?

Councillor: Oh. The Chimney of Ereko?

Old Man: That’s one. Tell the owner it is back on the road – in the forest, that is. Get him to drive it right through here and he can let it smoke as much as he likes.⁵¹²

The excerpt mentioned above in which we read Old Man’s proverb ‘No sensible man burns the house to cook a little yam’ under analysis is the continuation of the part of the play about the discussion between the living characters: Obaneji, Adenebi, Rola and Demoke. The action reveals their comments on Dead Man and Dead Woman as unworthy ancestors. In fact, we mention it again, Wole Soyinka’s *A Dance of the Forests* was produced in 1960 in conjunction with the celebration of independence in Nigeria. It is interesting to note that for such an auspicious occasion, Wole Soyinka chose to stage a critical play about old ghosts returning to haunt the living and interrupt the celebratory mood of the new nation. In the play, the councillors have asked the local deity, Forest Head sent “illustrious”⁵¹³ ancestors to the Gathering of the Tribes. What his servant, Aroni, the spirit who dwells in the forest, sends instead is something else: accusers, those who “accuse”⁵¹⁴ and tormentors. He summons Dead Man and

⁵¹² Wole Soyinka, “A Dance of the Forests” in *Collected Plays 1*, op. cit., p. 29.

⁵¹³ Ibid., op. cit., p.32.

⁵¹⁴ Ibid., op. cit., P.33.

Dead Woman, who are the resurrected Captain and his wife, both victims of the injustices perpetuated during the reign of Mata Kharibu eight centuries ago. The Captain or Warrior had refused to lead his army to fight the king's war and rejected the queen, Madame Tortoise's sexual advances. For such defiance, the queen had ordered that he be emasculated, that is to make him effeminate, weak, and be sold into slavery, which led his wife, who was still carrying their child, to commit suicide.

In addition, the excerpt quoted above is actually from the play. It mentions an other futility that Agboreko is about to commit, that is to say, he resort to petrol fume in the forest as a means to chasing the dead couple; he considers them as accusers and tormentors at the Gathering of the Tribes. That is why he insists on and repeats twice 'They cannot stand the smell of petrol'. The action of pouring petrol fume in the forest is one the forms of pollution. So, the use of proverb in their context that Wole Soyinka says through his second mouth that is Agboreko's, creates the meaning of Soyinka's call for the people to avoid polluting the environment. The use of this proverb in its context is an aesthetic feature because Wole Soyinka resorts to it to create a positive meaning.

Furthermore, Old Man's proverb 'No sensible man burns the house to cook little yam'⁵¹⁵ actually integrates the issue of conflict between the past represented by Dead Man and Dead Woman, and the present that Old Man himself and the other living characters represent, and the future they should project. This conflict lies on the refusal of the dead pair by the human characters.

When we read the excerpt quoted above, we realise that Old Man's proverb under consideration is the answer to his own question. This aspect evokes the idea of the oracle mentioned by Agboreko in his tag.

Proverb (4) is 'If the flea had a house of his own, he wouldn't be out on a dog's back.'⁵¹⁶ This proverb portrays the dishonour and lack of dignity attributed to the situation of having not a house of one's own, especially the consequence of being a parasite, that is, living on or in another and getting its food from it⁵¹⁷. We infer that if

⁵¹⁵ Ibid., op. cit., p.29.

⁵¹⁶ Ibid., op. cit., p.32.

⁵¹⁷ A.S. Hornby et al, *The Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*, op. cit.

the flea built his own house at the right time, as the proverb entails, he would not be responsible of his misfortune, just like being, that is also, living on the dog's back.

In addition, this proverb is a 'if clause', especially second conditional. In the second type of conditional, the verb of the subordinate is in the preterit, whereas the verb of the main part is in the conditional plus the infinitive of the main verb. To this effect, we establish a relation between the past and the present thanks to the structure of sentence. This structure shows the relation of cause and effect: 'the flea had not a house', and the consequence of that is 'he is on the dog's back.' This proverb tells how it is very important to have a house of its own, because the possession of it is a source of honour, protection, security; a sign of responsibility, wisdom, dignity, prosperity; it also proves the possibility to show hospitality to the helpless, having influent and honest descendants.

In the context of the play, this proverb 'If a flea had a house, he would not be on the dog's back' sounds as a mockery. This proverb uses animals: flea and dog. So, it is a riddle-fable-proverb.

Furthermore, this proverb integrates the issue of conflict between past, present and future to the extent that, when Agboreko uses it, by the 'flea' he means Dead Man and Dead Woman who return to the world of the living, and seem, according to him, in the situation of dependence to them. The dead pair re-appear on the world of the living characters in order to participate to the celebration of the Gathering of the tribes.

As in the previous proverb, Agboreko's is the answer to Old Man's question that is 'And where does Aroni means to hold court? The answer is Agboreko's 'If a flea had a house of his own, he would not be out on a dog's back'. This proverb is followed by his tag 'Proverb to bones and silence'.

In addition, Agboreko's proverb simply means that Aroni will probably hold court in the forest, the place they are, because the dead pair is now in their world.

Furthermore, to avoid fragmenting the action of the play in relation to proverb (5), (6) and (7), we analyse them all in a single section. These proverbs are: (5) 'The lips of the dead did not open thus far' (Agboreko, 33); (6) 'The chameleon dances, his father claps and you exclaim, 'how modesty the young one keeps silence' (Agboreko, 33); (7) 'Because it rained the day the egg was hatched the foolish chicken swore he was a fish' (Agboreko, 33). These three proverbs deal with the same idea, that is to

say, the unexpected invitation of Dead Man and Dead Woman to the celebration of the Gathering of the Tribes. They are also read on the same page.

The presence of the dead pair was synonymous with confrontation and judgement in the view of Agboreko, Old Man and the other living characters. The other important aspect in this context is, who will pass the judgement. In addition, these three proverbs will be analysed in the same section because they have been said by the same character, Agboreko, to Old Man. In the point of view of sentence forms, these three proverbs are answers, statements into the affirmative. For more details, proverb (6) is Agboreko's answer to Old Man's question; and before that proverb, Agboreko himself answers by an other question. So, proverb (6) is the answer to, both, Old Man's and Agboreko's question. Proverb (7) seems to hold the same position in the text because it is said by Agboreko, just after his question.

The composition of the text in which these three proverbs appear indicates how Agboreko and Old Man are negatively preoccupied by the presence of Dead Man and Dead Woman to the feast.

Let us now consider the three proverbs as they appear in the play:

Agboreko [shake his head.]: Aroni is Wisdom itself. When he means to expose the weaknesses of human lives, there is nothing can stop him. And he knows how to choose his time.

Old Man [drawing him aside.]: Oremole...the one

Fell from the tree. Is he among the dead?

Agboreko: Not yet. Perhaps not at all.

Old Man: And would the others accuse on his Behalf?

Agboreko: The lips of the dead did not open
Thus far. I cannot tell you.

Old Man: Does the Old Man of the Forest himself
Pass the judgement or is it his wayward court?

Agboreko: Would that affect the scales of Aroni?
The chameleon dances, his father claps and
You exclaim, 'How modesty the young one
Keeps silence.' Proverb to bones and silence.

Councillor: There is still hope. We have heard nothing of Forest Father. Perhaps Aroni merely acts on his own.

Agboreko [shake his head.]: Oro cried last night and Bashiru vanished from his bed. Do you still wonder what became of your friend? Proverb to bones and silence.

Councillor: I am sorry.

Adenebi: But where does your Forest Father come in ? Who is he anyway?

[There is total silence while they all stare at him.]

Agboreko: [sighs.]: Perhaps I should go and summon Murete once more. He might have eaten by now.

Old Man [quickly.]: Agboreko, pay no attention to...

Agboreko: Did you think I took notice? Because it rained the day the egg was hatched the foolish chicken swore he was a fish. Proverb to bones and silence. [Goes.]

Old Man [shouts after him]: Offer Murete millet wine for a whole year.⁵¹⁸

The excerpt mentioned above in which we read the three proverbs under analysis reveals that, both the living characters and the supernatural are aware of the weaknesses of the human lives, that Aroni means to expose without typifying them. In addition, Old Man's evocation of the name 'Oremole' in his question to Agboreko reminds one of the crimes committed, especially by Demoke, when he pulled him down from the sacred tree, and died. In other words, Old Man wants to know if Oremole who was killed by his son, Demoke is also among the dead pair to 'accuse' them, and in case he is not, if the dead pair would 'accuse' on his behalf. Proverb (5) is Agboreko's answer to these questions: 'The lips of the dead did not open thus far'. This proverb means that the dead did not yet, say anything concerning this point.

Proverb (6) 'The chameleon dances, his father claps and you exclaim, 'How modesty the young one keeps silence' is also an answer in the series of questions in relation to the circumstances in which the dead will confront the living characters. In addition, this statement is a riddled-fable-proverb in the extent that it makes us use our wits, and it sounds as a short tale, not based on fact, especially with an animal in it: the chameleon. In the context of the play, Agboreko's 'The chameleon dances, his father claps and you exclaim, 'How modesty the young one keeps silence', refers to Dead Man and Dead Woman. *A Dance of the Forests* seems to become a positive dance for the chameleon.

In addition, a chameleon is a small long-tongued animal whose colour changes accordingly to its background.⁵¹⁹ The colours of the chameleon are for survival, not for beauty; circumstances make chameleons change their colours. The chameleon looks forward or in front and observe, watch behind. This means also that, the chameleon has one eye on the future and one eye on the past.⁵²⁰ These qualities attributed to a chameleon reinforce the idea that when Agboreko talks about it in his proverb, he means the dead pair whose participation to the celebration of the Gathering of the Tribes is a disgrace for the living characters because they meet those they offended. The return of Dead Man and Dead Woman from the world of the dead to the world of the living is also part of the ideas expressed in the chameleon

⁵¹⁸ Ibid., p.33.

⁵¹⁹ A.S. Hornby et al, *The Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*, op. cit.

⁵²⁰ Julie Larsen Maher, "One Eye on the Future", <http://www.special-dictionary.com/proverbs/keywords/chameleon/> (March 2015).

qualities of colour changing for survival, looking forward and behind, having one eye on the past and one eye on the future. We do believe that all these qualities are profitable, not only to the chameleon, that is Dead Man and Dead Woman alone, but also to living characters. Agboreko and Old Man show the limitation of their awareness as to the outcoming of the dead pair participation to the Gathering of the tribes.

The presence of Dead Man and Dead Woman to the Gathering of the Tribes is actually an attempt to seek for a resolution for past mistakes. The Dead Man and the Dead Woman also came because they were yearning for their burden to be removed. They did not return to seek retribution but to be freed of the wrong wrought upon them in the past. This, we think, reflects Wole Soyinka's view that vengeance is not the goal of his efforts to remind the new nation of its shameful past. Rather, it is the acknowledgement of responsibility for the wrong committed that would be first step toward preventing a repeat of the same crime. As Dead Man tells Forest Head: 'I have come to sleep'⁵²¹ Meanwhile, the Dead Woman carries in her the burden of their unborn child. That is the essence of his say: 'It is a hard thing to carry this child for a hundred generations. And I thought...when I was asked, I thought... here's a chance to return the living to the living that I may sleep lighter'⁵²²

Both Dead Man and Dead Woman see the Gathering of the Tribes as an opportunity to have their burdens lifted off them. In addition, when we consider Dead Woman's statements above as a metaphor, she means that the dead couple, through their presence at the Gathering of the Tribes engage themselves to lay the foundation stone needed for the building of the nation expected by all the common sensed people.

In his article 'Looking Back is Looking Forward': Toward a Theory of Tradition in Niyi Osundare's Poetry, Christopher Anyokwo quotes Niyi Osundare⁵²³: 'For in the intricate dialectics of human living, looking back is looking forward; the visionary artist is not only a rememberer, he is also a reminder'⁵²⁴.

⁵²¹ Wole Soyinka, 'A Dance of the Forests' in *Collected Plays 1*, p. 61.

⁵²² Ibid., p. 8.

⁵²³ Niyi Osundare, *The Eye of the Earth* (Ibadan: Heinemann, 1986) xiv. In his paper entitled *The Writer as Righter: The African Literature Artist and His Social Obligations*, (Ibadan: Hope Publications, 2007) 31, Niyi Osundare notes: 'The past becomes not only a stepping stone, but a vision tower, for "looking back is to look ahead"' (Ayi Kwei Armah, *The Healers* (Ibadan: Heinemann, 1979) 172, This goes to show that the conceptual building-blocks of Osundare's poetics of Tradition actually derived from Ayi Kwei Armah, who, himself was inspired by his Ghanaian oral culture.

⁵²⁴ Ibid. n.p.

http://dspace.flinders.edu.au/jspui/bitstream/2328/27129/1/Looking_Back_is_Looking_Forward.pdf (March 2015).

This excerpt exemplifies the concept of ‘dialectics’ which, in *A Dictionary of Marxist Thought*⁵²⁵ is defined as ‘the conflict of opposites driving reality onwards in an historical process of constant progressive change, both evolutionary and revolutionary, and in its revolutionary or discontinuous changes bringing forth genuine qualitative novelty’. Dialectics may be said to refer to the relational type, namely, the movement of history. ‘Oppositions’ and ‘resolutions’ abound in the historical process since nature – both in the phenomenal and human worlds – intrinsically conflictual and contradictory. It is this contradiction – ridden human experience that Osundare in the excerpt above refers to as the ‘intricate dialectics of human living’. He goes on to stress the existential idea of ‘looking back’ [as] ‘looking forward’. The past may be thought to cover or stretch from prehistory (including mythic time and folklore) through recorded history to colonial and post-colonial era, that is, the recent past. In this vast and varied stretch of time, human society has always been governed and regulated by certain norms of behaviour, belief-system and cultural practices. And, expectedly, in traditional society, moral codes and ethical standards were clearly enunciated, with virtuous behaviour rewarded and encouraged and, conversely, vicious acts duly pilloried. It is this reward structure or system which undergirded the socialisation mechanism or process in ancient society.

Coming closer to home, in Yoruba (Africa) society, virtuous behaviour was and is still highly regarded as such character traits as honesty, hard work, love or compassion, neighbourliness and hospitality, integrity, honour and communalism were seen as the moral building-blocks of society. Deviance or/and anti-social behaviour such as sexual immorality, dishonesty, laziness and selfishness were discouraged.

The writer might be inspired by some external superior force. The act of creation, creativity confers on the artist some quasi-divine powers and prerogatives, such that we may begin to contemplate the artist-as-god. This portrait of the artist as man-god is analogous to the Nietzschean notion of man as Superman. The artist’s vision presupposes forward-looking, a prescient mind-frame which enables him to dream alternative possibilities for his society as he contributes his own quota to the grand agenda of changing the world.

⁵²⁵ Tom Bottomore et al., *A Dictionary of Marxist Thought* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1983), P.120.

Yet, the visionary writer is a ‘rememberer’. That is to say, the writer does not discard or discount the past in his attempt to bring about a brave new world of possibility. Even if he wishes to discountenance the past, he cannot. The past, therefore, constitutes the common backcloth, the fount of his own creative essence. It is this omnipresent past that he must always ‘remember’ – both to avoid its negative aspects and to reinforce and celebrate its positive aspects. Accordingly, Osundare in *Midlife* writes: ‘But what if we forget the past and the past never fails to remember us...?’⁵²⁶

To conclude his article, Christopher Anyokwu asserts that the past is present. An attitude of faith in the ineluctability of the past coupled with its influence on the present can give rise to essentialism or/undialectical ahistoricism. Like the myth of eternal return, past will always re-assert itself in the present as whatever is created, composed or, even conceived is basically a re-enactment, a re-dramatisation, and, hence, a perpetuation of past. Indeed, as Eliot declaims:

Time present and time past
Are both perhaps present in time future
And time future contained in time past.⁵²⁷

Since art does not improve but only its materials do, the living writer can only hope and endeavour to ever so slightly alter past by using new data, new ideas and new experiences to reconfigure and revamp past to suit the changed social situation. What comes through change, then, is simply past methodised/ modified. Indeed, it is past that things change and do change.

Furthermore, proverbs (8) and (9) will also be analysed in the same section as we have done earlier. In fact, proverb (8) is ‘Until the last gourd has been broken, let us not talk of drought’, and proverb (9) is ‘If the wind get lost in the rainstorm, it is useless to send him an umbrella’.⁵²⁸ Proverb (8) means, people should wait until the appropriate time comes to do, to see whatever they want. This idea is clear in the proverb when we emphasize on the meaning of the image of ‘the last gourd has been broken’. The gourd is a recipient made from the dried shell for storing drinks or other liquids; typically cylindrical without handles and with a narrow neck that can be

⁵²⁶ Niyi Osundare, *Midlife* (Ibadan: Heinemann, 1993), p. 108.

⁵²⁷ T.S. Eliot, *Four Quartets* (London: Faber and Faber, 1944), p.13.

⁵²⁸ Wole Soyinka, ‘A Dance of the Forests’ in *Collected Plays 1*, op. cit., P. 35.

plugged or capped.⁵²⁹ In most African cultures, the gourd is linked with the ancestors and represents a belief that, like the ancestors, even though the gourd is actually dead and dried, it is still very much a part of the culture... The most important idea is that the gourd is used to store, to keep, to transport liquids. To this effect, the break of the gourd means to reveal the secrets to all the people.

Through the use of this proverb, Wole Soyinka expresses the value of patience because Old Man does not want to wait too long for knowing the fourth individual who is with his son, Demoke, Rola and Adenebi. The Old Man fears for the fourth person may be Eshouro who searches Demoke in order to punish him because the carver has killed Oremole, Eshouro's servant.

As for proverb (9) 'If the wind get lost in the rainstorm, it is useless to send him an umbrella,' it emphasizes the problem, and the people's attitude to bring the appropriate solution. This proverb means, people should not waste their time to try to solve problems which are not actually real concerns: the case of the wind, if it can get lost in the rainstorm, it is useless to send him an umbrella, because the wind is only the air in motion as the result of natural forces, and the umbrella is a folding frame with a stick and handle, covered with cotton, silk, etc., used to shelter the person holding it from rain. This proverb insists on patience that Old Man should prove; time itself will tell them who the fourth person is.

As clear as it may appear, African proverbs are characterized by its eloquence that is the art to speak well which is very relevant to African Negro aesthetics. In addition, African proverb is often endowed with repetition which plays the role of insistence on the message that the proverb conveys.

The functions fulfilled in the analysed proverbs work also in proverb (10) 'The eyes that look downwards will certainly see the nose. The hand that dips to the bottom of the pot will eat the biggest snail. The sky grows no grass but if the earth called her barren, it will drink no more milk. The foot of the snake is not split in two like a man's or in hundreds like the centipede's, but if Agere could dance patiently like the snake, he will uncoil the chain that leads into the dead...' ⁵³⁰

To begin with, the message that the author conveys is the same as in proverb (9); it is the value of patient and the good consequences which go with. This means also

⁵²⁹ <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/gourd>. (March 2015).

⁵³⁰ Wole Soyinka, 'A Dance of the Forests' in *Collected Plays I*, op. cit., P. 36.

that, in proverb (10) Agboreko merely argues Old Man to be patient; he lavishes words on Old Man in the fashion reminiscent of village wiseacre, that is a dull and boring person who pretends to much wiser than he is. Through proverb (10), we reinforce the idea that Wole Soyinka is the writer who employs copious Yoruba sayings associated with people of his ilk.

In addition, proverb (10) is an accumulation of other proverbs. The meaning of this wise saying, that is the exemplification of patience is revealed in all the statements, being a separate proverb. Proverb (10) is an accumulation of four separate proverbs; and one of the statements accumulates the word ‘snake’. The sound proverbs within proverb (10) are: ‘The eyes that look downwards will certainly see the nose’, ‘The hand that dips to the bottom of the pot will eat the biggest snail’, ‘The foot of the snake is not split in two like a man’s or in hundreds like the centipede’s, but if Agere could dance patiently like the snake, he will uncoil the chain that leads into the dead...’⁵³¹

As far as the first statement of this practice of proverbs within the proverb is concerned, that is ‘The eyes that look downwards will certainly see the nose’, it exemplifies the position of two parts of the human body: the eyes and the nose; how it is difficult for the eyes to look downwards to see the nose. In fact in his introduction of chapter eight devoted to ‘Ocular Motor Control’, Valentin Datroi⁵³² writes that normal visual perception requires the proper functioning of ocular motor system that control the position and movement of the eyes to focus the image of the object-of-interest on corresponding areas of the retinas of the two eyes. For each eye, six muscles work together to control eye position and movement. Four extra ocular muscles working together control vertical eye movements and eyes rotation around the mid-orbital axis. Contraction of the superior oblique and inferior rectus produce respectively eye depression, medial and lateral rotation, and adduction. To direct the eye downward, two muscles contract synergistically as the two antagonist muscles relax. The inferior rectus and superior oblique working together pull the eye downward without rotating the eye. Interconnections between the trochlear nucleus and

⁵³¹ Ibid., p. 36.

⁵³² Valentin Datroi, ‘Support Neuroscience Online and Neuroanatomy Online’. <http://neuroscience.uth.tmc.edu/s3/chapter08.html>. (March 2015).

oculomotor nuclear complex coordinate their activity to *allow the upward and downward movement of the eyes* (my emphasis). These interconnecting axons appear to travel along with the fibers of the tectospinal tract.

The essential idea in the scientific findings referred to on the ocular motor control is the fact that, for the eyes to look downward to see the nose, it implicates eye depression, medial and lateral rotation and synergistically contraction of muscles. In the play, Agboreko takes the image of the eyes function of looking downwards which causes depression of eyes, and makes it the condition for the eyes to see the nose. Through the use of this image in his proverbial statement Agboreko makes Old Man low in spirits as to his need to know the identity of the fourth person who was with his son, Demoke, Rola and Adenebi.

The second sound proverbial statement within the proverb is ‘‘The hand that dips to the bottom of the pot will eat the biggest snail.’’ In this statement, we emphasize ‘the hand’, ‘the bottom of the pot’, and ‘eat the biggest snail’. The relation of cause and effect is perceivable in these elements. To rephrase the idea of this statement, we write, to eat the biggest snail the hand should dip into the bottom of the pot. This means that people should do what is required in the process of finding best results. In the saying Agboreko uses the image of ‘snail’ to mean the best of what is needed. Snail is a good source of valuable digestible protein in Africa and Nigeria in particular. It contains up 16% protein made up of almost all the essential amino acids, low in fibre and cholesterol and very rich in iron and minerals up to 50gm per kilogram.⁵³³ For this reason it is recommended in the diet of anemia patients. It is a precious and expensive delicacy on the table of many household. Snail is also believed to possess mechanical substances for the treatment of whooping cough and asthma because the liquids in snail is known to cause agglutination of certain bacteria.

Furthermore, these two first proverbs within the proverb, we mean ‘‘The eyes that look downwards will certainly see the nose’’, ‘‘The hand that dips to the bottom of the pot will eat the biggest snail’’, are strictly close to the type used by Christopher Okigbo in his *Labyrinths*, which refers to modern poetry rooted on oral tradition: ‘The eyes that look down will surely see the nose’ and ‘The finger that fits should be used

⁵³³ <http://www.habanaija.com/all-you-need-to-know-to-make-money-from-snail-farming/>. (March 2015).

to pick the nose'⁵³⁴. The two proverbs and Wole Soyinka's are direct translations from local stock of proverbs.

In addition, to limit the comment to Wole Soyinka's plays, and *A Dance of the forests* in particular, we realise that this literary work contains proverbs which are borrowed from oral traditions and modified to suit the socio-political vision intended in the drama. Helen Chukwama stresses the importance of proverbs especially when they are borrowed and modified to project opinions in modern African writing:

Proverbs are used to express an essential idea. When they are used in verse, they are not usually subject to a rendition in their original forms. Rather they are modified and adapted according to the demand of rhythm and beat. Adaptation may take the form of adding a few words or of contrasting the proverb words while still retaining the essential image necessary for its identification.⁵³⁵

As clear as it may appear, Agboreko's 'The eyes that look downwards will certainly see the nose', 'The hand that dips to the bottom of the pot will eat the biggest snail' amplifies Old Man's plea for patience. This is a positive amplification which does not actually match positively the context of the play, and its integration in Nigerian real political situation. We mean that Agboreko's proverbs are somewhat part of general truth, but they are not used to depict the reality in the sense of improving the people's political situation. In addition, Agboreko advises Old Man to be patient so that their secret is not revealed. The secret is synonymous with their attempt to hide their evil practices through the refusal of their confrontation with the dead pair and all those who have been victims of their past crimes.

So, Wole Soyinka uses these proverbial statements to caution those in the vanguard of Nigerian politics at a crucial moment of the political history of the country. In addition, Wole Soyinka creates the characters of Agboreko and Old Man to point out the wrongdoings of people in power in the newly independent country, those who might work for the people at the same time as they work for themselves. For more details, he presents them how they are far and not ready to accept new change, that is the promotion of the people's interests.

As for the third proverb within the proverb, 'The foot of the snake is not split in two like a man's or in hundreds like the centipede's, but if Agere could dance

⁵³⁴ Christopher Okigbo, *Labyrinths* (London: Heinemann, 1971), p. 67.

⁵³⁵ Helen Chukwama, 'The Oral Nature of Traditional Poetry and Language', *Journal of the Nigerian English Studies*, 8. 1 (May, 1973), p.17.

patiently like the snake, he will uncoil the chain that leads into the dead...”, it is a metaphorical proverb which bases its comparison on a wild animal, ‘the snake’, and ‘the man’, at the level of their respective ‘foot’. This comparison shows and describes ‘the foot of the snake’: ‘it is not split in two like a man’s or in hundreds like the centipedes’. Through this metaphorical proverb, Agboreko means, together with Old Man, they should not have two feet as Murete has, because, he represents natural elements; he considers that his home that is the forest looks ‘dead’ to the extent that the tree leaves have served someone, the living people for the feast: ‘Someone else – some woodcutter or something – had cut off his own’⁵³⁶. That is why he does not want to attend the ritual gathering which is organized by the Forest Head for the living people: “I’ll do him a mischief one of these days”. But unfortunately, he adds: “...I am going to drink millet wine at the feast of the living”⁵³⁷.

Agboreko and Old Man should not belong to two worlds. This may also mean, they should not accept the new world replace the old world. The foot is the anatomical structure found in many vertebrates. It is the terminal portion of limb which bears weight and allows locomotion. This metaphorical proverb refers to stories, legends from Yoruba myth. In the definition of the word ‘the foot’ the important idea is, it is the terminal portion of limb which bears weight and allows locomotion, that is the ability to move from one place to another. This definition reveals the idea of power, authority contained in conservative and conformist attitude. As for ‘the snake’, in “‘Animal Symbolism’”,⁵³⁸ it has been given the following attributions: elusiveness, transmutation, exploration of the mystery of life, primitive and elemental energy, protection from religious persecution, goddess energy, psychic energy, creative power, immortality, rebirth, resurrection, initiation, wisdom, healing, transformation. Additionally, in “‘Yoruba dream symbols’”,⁵³⁹ ‘the centipede’ as the millipede is known by its several legs, and it is a metaphor for someone who is very slow. At this level of analysis, this part of proverb (10) underlines the qualities that Agboreko and Old Man need to be successful in resisting the coming of new ideas associated with the birth of the new nation. Those qualities are: power, a deep understanding of the character of the new ideas, its aim, and operation as well. The ideas of the new nation

⁵³⁶ Wole Soyinka, “A Dance of the Forests” in *Collected Plays 1*, op. cit., p. 12.

⁵³⁷ Ibid.

⁵³⁸ <http://onespiritx.tripod.com/magick18.htm>. (March 2015).

⁵³⁹ http://theadventureofakin.blogspot.com.es/2011/09/every-culture-and-people-around-world_02.html. (March 2015).

are summarised as it follows: in the context of Nigeria's Independence Day celebrations, a truly human modern state can only emerge from a collective recognition of the real historic inheritance and a visionary transformation of it, accomplished through the bringing together of past, present, and future in a moment of ritual vision.

Agboreko and Old Man need power to resist the idea of collective recognition of the historic inheritance and visionary transformation of it. In addition, this resistance is led through power they call upon them from Agere. That is the essence of "but if Agere could dance patiently like the snake, he will uncoil the chain that leads into the dead...". In fact, Agere Ifa⁵⁴⁰ is a single specific from the very important ritual artifacts utilized by divination priests. When someone or a group of people which has a difficulty consults Ifa priest, the diviner employs sixteen sacred palm nuts to "cast Ifa" and generate photographs to that customer. This may also mean, Agereifa is a Yoruba divination figurative bowl used by the Yoruba to consult Orunmila, god of wisdom, to help them to understand the cause of misfortune or to secure blessings and advice on significant understandings.

As clear as it may appear, through "The foot of the snake is not split in two like a man's or in hundreds like the centipede's, but if Agere could dance patiently like the snake, he will uncoil the chain that leads into the dead...", Agboreko expresses their commitment to resistance as to the collective recognition of the real historic inheritance and a visionary transformation of it. To this, this proverb actually integrates the issue of conflict between past, present and future.

Proverb (2) "If you see the banana leaf Freshly fibrous like a woman's breasts If you see the banana leaf Shred itself, thread on thread Hang wet as the crepe of grief Don't say it's the wind. Leave the dead some room to dance."⁵⁴¹ This proverb is, as the above analysed proverb a statement that refers to stories or legends from Yoruba myth. In *A Dance of the Forests*, this proverb is placed in the context of the story about the presence of Dead Man and Dead Woman in the ritual ceremonies. In fact, this presence is not a good news for the living people because the dead pair is summoned to give testimony on human beings' destructive bent. Through the proverb under

⁵⁴⁰ <http://scma.smith.edu/artmuseum/layout/set/popup/content/view/full/396>. (March 2015).

⁵⁴¹ Wole Soyinka, "A Dance of the Forests" in *Collected Plays 1*, op. cit., p. 36.

consideration which sounds also as a metaphor, the Dirge-Man makes know to the attendant of the ritual meeting, human beings' misleads which the Dead Man and the Dead Woman are going to uncover. The banana leaf is the leaf of the banana plant. In Yoruba culture, it is used for various functions, such as for decorative elements, wrappings, plate mat, and employed in cooking method.⁵⁴² The second function that is 'wrappings' is fulfilled in the proverb. In fact, 'wrappings' derives from 'to wrap' which means to cover; and the context of the play uses also the meaning in opposition, that is 'to uncover'. The image of "'banana leaf'" refers to atrocious experience that Dead-Man and Dead Woman have experienced in the court of Mata Kharibu. The dead man who is in fact the warrior of the king and the dead woman his wife undergo, in Mata Kharibu's realm, mistreatments because the warrior refused to lead the army for an unjustified war which is ordered by Mata Kharibu. The dead couple's shattered experience even though it is 'thread on thread' meaning linked up with their different parts to be uncovered to the attendants of the ritual meeting, still, 'hang wet as the crepe of grief'. In other words, past anguish still remains in the minds of the living people even though it would be a difficult experience to bear it secretly. The Dirge-Man message conveys perspective of human condition which is represented through yearn for violence symbolized by war, oppression, subjugation which have mainly taken place in Africa.

Furthermore, proverb (11) is "'The loft is not out of reach when the dust means to settle.'" ⁵⁴³ The crux of this proverb is the message of inevitability. The idea of the dust – reaching the loft is referenced. The moral message of inevitability of happening according to their due time is preached indirectly. In addition, this proverb reveals the idea of seasons and the natural phenomenon in accordance with. So, people should not try their hands at preventing whatever happens according to time. In the context of the play, Agboreko uses this proverb to tell Old Man that, it becomes impossible for them to avoid the coming of the dead pair to the Gathering of the Tribes. The dead pair's participation to the ceremony becomes inevitable.

⁵⁴² <http://www.kumarss.com/2012/02/abstracts-on-banana-leaf.html>. (March 2015).

⁵⁴³ Wole Soyinka, "A Dance of the Forests" in *Collected Plays 1*, op. cit., p. 36.

The analysis of proverbs related to conflict between past, present and future is closely linked to the actions of the play, *A Dance of the Forests* revolving around comments of the living characters on the coming of the dead couple to the Gathering of the Tribes. Forest Head does send Dead Man and Dead Woman to the Gathering of the Tribes. Forest Head in *A Dance of the Forests* is actually the voice of Wole Soyinka, author of the play; as a dramatist he puts all his words into the mouths of his characters; he never speaks in his own voice. Wole Soyinka's anguish at seeing every natural pattern of life turned into unnatural patterns makes him ask, where salvation lies. As Forest Head says towards the end of the play,

The fooleries of beings whom I have fashioned closer to me weary and distress me. Yet I must persist, knowing that nothing is ever altered. My secret is my eternal burden – to pierce the encrustations of soul – deadening habit, and bare the mirror of original nakedness – knowing full well it is all futility. Yet I must do this alone, and no more, since to intervene is to be guilty of concentration, and yet to remain altogether unfelt is to make my long – rumoured ineffectuality complete; hoping that when I have tortured awareness from their souls, that perhaps, only perhaps, in new beginnings....⁵⁴⁴

Here speaks the creator of the universe, but also, most feelingly, the human creator, the poet and playwright, whose purpose it is indeed to pierce the encrustations of soul – deadening habit, and bare the mirror of original nakedness up to his readers and spectators.

This is life's journey, a quest for self-awareness. Michael Ertherton describes it as crime-guilt-confession-pardon-expiation; this may be a process for morality, but for Soyinka it stops short of full self-apprehension, the full awareness of being. Those who have the capacity for action, and a sensibility which perceives the inner contradictions in all existence, especially the creative artist, must go further, they must dare the fourth space.

The use of proverbs in the context of conflicts between past, present and future is indeed an aesthetic feature, a positive aesthetic feature because, through the use of proverbs Wole Soyinka creates meanings that process the reader's new ideas and rekindle old ones that are of value; counteract negative or neutral influences; and help the readers to counteract their own habitual negative thoughts and emotions, by reinforcing them with positive ones.

⁵⁴⁴ Ibid., p.76.

All the proverbs we have analysed above integrate and deal with the issue of conflict between past, present and future; they are all from *A Dance of the Forests*. Because, the play's matter as argued by Biodun Jeyifo might throw some light on the type of drama that *A Dance of the Forests* is. According to Jeyifo:

This is a play which, after all, is designed in its themes and conflicts to shock its expected middle-class audience out of amnesia about the past and out of euphoria about the present, these being the pervasive complacent spiritual and ideological attitudes of the elites of the then newly independent African countries.⁵⁴⁵

All in all, we may provisionally argue that *A Dance of the Forests* is at once a dark comedy, a farce, a satire and a tragedy all rolled together depending on a variety of ideological and epistemological positions that we are prepared to adopt. Soyinka in this regard is a bit of everything: comedian, farceur, parodist, satirist and tragedian. Hence, Dereck Wright writes that 'It is never safe to assume that ideas he propounds in one context will be consistent with ideas on the subject he expressed in a different one'⁵⁴⁶. Commenting on Soyinka's bewildering versatility, Wright quotes Soyinka's words: "One must never try to rigidify the divisions between one experience and another". Soyinka has protested, for in the Yoruba worldview, "all experiences flow into one another".⁵⁴⁷

We can, without any doubt, consider that type of drama *A Dance of the Forests* is, as part of Wole Soyinka's aesthetics.

The next and last three proverbs through which Wole Soyinka creates meaning to deal with the issue of conflict between past, present and future are taken from *The Swamp Dwellers*. Here again, to avoid fragmentation of ideas, proverbs (12) and (13) will be analysed within the same section. In addition, these two appear on the same page; they are said respectively by Makuri and Beggar in their long discussion.

To begin with proverb (12) by Makuri, 'The blind man does not hurry for fear he out-walks his guide', this proverb is a philosophical, empirical and general truth, portraying the situation of fear, and the solution of hurrying for the blind man. The meaning is lucid: in fear-time the blind does not hurry; he out-walks his guide. The proverb entails hard times, and the good choice that one should make to overcome

⁵⁴⁵ Biodun Jeyifo, *Wole Soyinka* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p.137.

⁵⁴⁶ Derek Wright, *Wole Soyinka Revisited* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1993), P.3.

⁵⁴⁷ Derek Wright, *Wole Soyinka Revisited*, op. cit., P.4.

difficulties without deceiving none rather raising optimistic views in people. There is no need to make choices which are not about to resolve a difficulty. In *The Swamp Dwellers*, this proverb is said by Makuri to talk about the Beggar. Makuri uses this proverb as the reply to Alu's attitudes towards the arriving of the Beggar in their house first of all, and the Beggar's own need to leave, to 'follow the river to the end'. In fact, the use of this proverb by Makuri means that the Beggar has made a very good choice to come to their house. In addition, through the use of the proverb 'The blind man does not hurry for fear he out-walks his guide', Makuri describes the Beggar morally to show that he is a man of courage who refuses to have his infirmity interfering with his pride as a human being. The Beggar is not intended to achieve anything physical; he is only to inspire those like Igwezu, Makuri's son, who seem to have lost purpose in life, but have the physical capacity, to look at life a little more positively and to tackle their problems with more confidence. What he continually searches for is a positive, life-giving force.

Furthermore, proverb (13) is 'When the sickness is over, the darkness begins'. This proverb is said by Beggar as his discussion with Makuri goes on. This wise saying rhetorically emphasizes the universality of ill-health: it is among the phenomena that go round. This metaphorical proverb is further interpreted to mean the situation of hope coming after the people have overcome troubles like 'the sickness', and the malevolent creative force which then, continually makes the people experience such cycle of eternal sufferings, 'darkness'.

In the context of the play, this proverb refers to the people's sufferings due to, first of all to the violence of nature with the coming of floods, the descend of locust upon the hard-won crops with a vengeance; and secondly, the precarity of practices in agricultural activities (use of traditional tools and the no use of insecticide), the lack of scientific knowledge needed to master the seasonal phenomenon; the people's superstitions: they continue to offer humble homage and sacrifice to the serpent through the priest, Kadiye as means for them obtaining protection of their crops. This proverb can also be integrated in the lives of both, Beggar and Igwezu. In fact, the Beggar loses his crops to locust and leaves his home in Bukanji, walks to the south passing through the city, searching for land to cultivate. Igwezu also loses his home in the Swamp and takes shelter in town. That is both experienced misfortune but are revolved to earn their livelihood by working. To provide more details that are helpful

in understanding the cyclical experience of sufferings conveyed in Beggar's proverb 'When the sickness is over, the darkness begins', we add that Igwezu experiences misfortune both in the city and in his native Swamp. In fact, in the city his twin brother Awuchike seduces his wife, and in the village, the floods devastated his crops. To this effect, 'When the sickness is over, the darkness begins' expresses ideas to understand Igwezu's double misfortune. 'When the sickness is over' stands for the first misfortune, in the city, and 'the darkness begins' is associated with the second misfortune, in the Swamp.

In addition, after this very short view of the action of the play, we find it better to write the excerpt under consideration in *The Swamp Dwellers*:

[The footsteps are right at the door. There is a knock on the wall.]

Alu: That's a queer mood he's in. Why is he knocking?

Makuri: It's not Igwezu...I didn't think they were his footsteps.

[Goes towards the door and pulls aside the door matting.] A good evening to you, stranger.

Voice Offstage: Allah protect you.

Makuri: Were you sent to me? Come into the house.

[The caller enters, feeling his way with a staff.]

Makuri: [Picks up the bundle from the floor.] Alu, take this bundle out of here...And bring some light. It is too dark in here.

Beggar: No, no. Not on my account. It makes no difference whatever to me.

Makuri [in a bewildering manner.]: Oh...oh...I understand.

[Takes hold of the other end of the staff and leads him to the swivel chair.] Sit here...Ah.

[Touches the stranger's forehead, and then his, saying devoutly -] Blessed be the afflicted of the gods.

[The blind man is tall...His feet are muddy above the ankles.

The rest of him is lightly wet. ...]

Makuri: You have journeyed far?

Beggar: Very far. I came all the way down the river.

Makuri: Walking?

Beggar: Mostly of the way. Wherever it was possible, I walked. But sometimes, I was forced to accept a lift from the ferries.

Makuri [looks rapidly down his legs.]: Alu! Some water for the man to wash his feet.

Alu [coming in with the tapper.]: Give me time. I can't do everything at once, can I?

[Lights the oil lamps which are hanging from the rafters. Goes back again.]

Makuri: Have you met anyone in the village? Were you directed here?

Beggar: No. This happened to be the first house on my way...Are you the head of this house?

Makuri: Y-yes I am.

Beggar: Then it is with you I must speak.

Makuri: We haven't much, but you can have shelter for the night, and food for...

Beggar: I have not come to beg for alms.

Makuri: Oh? Do you know anyone here?

Beggar: No. I came from far away in the North. Have you ever heard of Bukanji?

Makuri: Bukanji? Bukan...? Ah, is that not the village of beggars?

Beggar: So it is known by the rest of the world...the village of Beggars...but I have not come to beg.

Makuri: Bukanji! That is a march of several weeks!

Beggar: I have been journeying for longer than that. I resolved to follow the river as far as it went, and never turn back. If I leave here, it will be to continue in the same direction.

Makuri: But this is the end – this is where the river ends!

Beggar: No, friend. There are many more miles left of this river.

Makuri: Yes, yes...But the rest is all swamp. Between here and the sea, you'll not find a human soul.

Beggar: **I must stay here or walk on.** I have sworn to tread only where the soil is moist.

Makuri: You'll not get far in that direction. This is the end. This is as far as human beings can go, even those who have the use of their sight.

Beggar: Then I must stay here.

Makuri: What do you want?

Beggar: Work.

Makuri: Work?

Beggar: Yes, work. I wish to work on the soil. I wish to knead it between my fingers.

Makuri: But you're blind. Why don't you beg like others? There is no true worshipper who would deny you this charity.

Beggar: I want a home, and I wish to work with my hands.

Makuri [in utter bewilderment.]: You...the afflicted of the gods! Do you really desire to work, when even the least devout lives under the strict injunction of hospitality towards you?

Beggar [getting up.]: No more. All the way down the river the natives read me the code of the afflicted, according to their various faiths. Some fed and clothes me. Others put money in my hands, food and drink in my bag. With some, it was the children and their stones, and sometimes the dogs followed me and whetted their teeth on my ankles...Good-bye. I shall follow the river to the end.

Makuri: Wait. You are very hasty. Did you never learn that *the blind does not hurry for fear he out-walks his guide*? Sit down again...Alu! Alu! When is that supper coming?

Alu [from inside.]: What supper? The last time it was water for washing his feet.

Makuri: Well, hurry... [Helps the blind man back into the chair.] There...Now tell me all about your journey...Did you come through any of the big cities?

Beggar: One or two, but I did not stop there. I walked right through without a halt.

Makuri: And you have been on the road for...how long did you say?

Beggar: I have lost all count of me. To me, one day is just like another... ever since my sight became useless.

Makuri: It must be strange...living in perpetual dark.

Beggar: I did not have many years to enjoy the benefit of the eyes. Four or five years at the most, and then... You have heard of the fly sickness?

Makuri [shaking his head.]: Who hasn't? Who hasn't?

Beggar: [...] The human beings fall ill and suffer agonies. *When the sickness is over, the darkness begins...*

At first, it is mystifying and then... [Smiles]. When it happened to me, I thought I was dead and that I had gone to a paradise where my earthly eyes were unsufficing.⁵⁴⁸

This action of play actually bears indications of conflict between past, present and future. The conflict does not appear in the manner it is presented in the previous proverbs, from *A Dance of the Forests*.

In *The Swamp Dwellers*, the tragic concern is the community's allegiance to the serpent, deity of the Swamp. The critical issue here is the 'rebellion' of the youth against the time-honoured beliefs of the people of the swamps. For them the swamps hold out no promise, and one by one they forsake the land to seek their fortunes in the city. Thus the central problem of the play is the dilemma of a man caught between societal expectations, on the one hand, and the urge to seek release from the swamp,

⁵⁴⁸ Wole Soyinka, "The Swamp Dwellers" in *Collected Plays I*, op. cit., pp. 88-90.

on the other, so that he can realize his individuality elsewhere. The community expects Igwezu to remain in the swamps, scratch a meagre existence out of what bit of land is available to the people, be long-suffering and continue to offer humble homage and sacrifice to the serpent through his priest, the Kadiye. This Igwezu is not prepared to do. This means also that the issue of the conflict between past, present and future in *The Swamp Dwellers* is dealt with in the form of the battle between the old and the better approaches for life in Africa, the clash between custom and innovation.

The use of these proverbs through the mouths of Makuri and Beggar by Wole Soyinka presents to his readers the picture of present day Africa, looking for ways, having found some for its own progress. Wole Soyinka communicates the requirement for a parity between the old and the new. Through the use of the above analyzed proverbs, we see Wole Soyinka's campaign against youth's disillusionment with the village and the town.

Furthermore, proverb (17) is 'The swallows find their nest again when the cold is over'⁵⁴⁹. It is said by Beggar as a note of optimism. The Beggar is aware of his role in the future of the swamp. Proverb (17) is the Beggar's vision of the future. After the 'cold' things will spring back to life. In this proverb, 'cold' should not be taken as good weather; but as hard time, sufferings. The Beggar is a blind man, a stranger in the swamp. He seems to be the only one who had perceived the things that motivating Igwezu's behavior, will remain to preach young man's desire to be free from the inhibiting effect of the Serpent's priest's crooked ways, and to seek life.

From this, it would seem that the proverbs analyzed are actually motivated by the issue of conflict between past, present and future. Thirteen proverbs have been selected in relation with the theme of conflict between past, present and future. Among them, ten are taken from *A Dance of the Forests*, and three from *The Swamp Dwellers*.

In the first play, Wole Soyinka does use proverbs to create meaning through which he satirizes the attitudes of a minority of people in power, the so-called wise men, those who would be considered as models, good examples to follow, mentors, etc. for the younger generations; these attitudes can be summarized in the attempt to refuse collective responsibility in the road to Nigeria's birth of a true nation where all the

⁵⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 112.

people experience the welfare state. One may be right to evoke the crisis of leadership in post-colonial Nigeria.

The action of *A Dance of the Forests* which motivates the creation of meanings by Wole Soyinka through the use of proverbs is the invitation of the Dead Man and the Dead Woman to the Gathering of the Tribes. The living characters such as Agboreko and Old Man who secretly are aware of their wrongdoings, crimes, etc. unwelcome the dead pair as a way to escape the confrontation which is synonymous with the exposition of their futility. That is why through this analysis, we notice a real gap, distance between the proverbs expressing general truth used by Agboreko, Old Man, and the context of the play so that they might meet the people's aspiration. These two characters' use of proverbs does not actually serve the function of instruction, but of destruction. This is the reason of Wole Soyinka's satire. The author uses proverbs in such a way that the play is culturally-oriented. Beside tags, he employs proverbs. In his proverbs, he uses repetitions and accumulations; symbols and images such as: the banana leaf, burning of the house, little yam, the flea, the dog's back, the lips of the dead, the chameleon, the eggs, the foolish chicken, last gourd broken, the wind got lost in the rainstorm, the eyes, the nose, the hand, the biggest snail, the foot of the snake, Agere, the loft, etc.

In addition, we locate and consider the summoning of dead figures in Wole Soyinka's *A Dance of the Forests* as a narrative device to emphasize on Negro African aesthetics. In 'Soyinka's Ritual Drama: Unity, Postmodernism, and the Mistake of the Intellect', William S. Haney II⁵⁵⁰ depicts the importance of immortal characters' adaptation in Soyinka's works. In *A Dance of the Forests*, Soyinka's use of the two obscure spirits of the restless dead is meant to represent the coexistence of opposites such as morality and immorality. For William S. Haney, the Dead Man and the Dead Woman characterize the unchangeable field of pure conscious, which is the source of all historical change because it is the field of infinite dynamism.

Furthermore, African oral tradition, especially the Yoruba spiritual belief about the supernatural beings' cohabitation with the human community is mainly on African psyche, and plays an important socio-political role. For the Yoruba, the world of

⁵⁵⁰ Haney, William S. Haney, 'Soyinka's Ritual Drama: Unity, Postmodernism, and the Mistake of the Intellect', in *Research in African Literature* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1990), pp. 22- 42.

metaphysical beings is not only composed of the dead people but there are also spirits consisting of the ghost and good spiritual creatures.

In the second play, *The Swamp Dwellers*, from which we have selected three proverbs, the finding is the same. Wole Soyinka creates meaning through proverbs to deal with the issue of conflict between past, present and future. Two of those proverbs are in the action of the play about the discussion between Makuri and Beggar during the arrival of Beggar in Makuri's house. The proverb that Makuri uses emphasizes the Beggar's powerful and penetrative spiritual light as, first of all, to his own decision to leave from North for the South, after his choice of Makuri's house, and then his capacity to detect the bulk of the Priest out of his voice.

The Beggar's proverb takes into account his own and Igwezu's lives as to their experiences of misfortune, 'darkness' respectively in the north for Beggar, and in the city for Igwezu, and their experiences in the swamp where they meet after the return of Igwezu to the swamp. These two proverbs actually contain meanings about conflict between past and present. The third and last proverb is used by Beggar at the end of the play. Through this proverb by Beggar, Wole Soyinka creates meanings that show his optimism for a better future.

IV-2-2- Proverbs and Cultural Values.

The wording of this subsection is meaningful. It is made up of two important words: conflict and values. The first word that is 'conflict' means fight, struggle, quarrel, opposition and difference⁵⁵¹. In addition, the word 'conflict' also means a state of open, often prolonged fighting; a battle or war, a state of disharmony between incompatible or antithetical persons, ideas, or interests; a clash⁵⁵². The second important word is 'values'. It is defined as important and lasting beliefs or ideals shared by the members of a culture about what is good or bad and desirable or undesirable. Values have major influence on a person's behavior and attitude and serve as broad guidelines in all situations⁵⁵³. To this effect, the noun phrase "conflict of values" refers to a state when antithetical persons have each certain principles, standars, choices, etc. that mean differently to others.

⁵⁵¹ A.S. Hornby et al, *The Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*, Op. cit

⁵⁵² <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/values.html> (March 2015).

⁵⁵³ <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/conflict>. (March 2015).

In addition, Jiang Chang, Feng Jun⁵⁵⁴ writes that there are traditional conflict of values and contemporary conflict of values. The distinction is that the traditional conflict of values occurred largely in the moral realm, and its essence and focus lie in the conflict between individual and whole interests. Whereas, the contemporary conflict of values is distinguished by these features: extensiveness, the contemporary conflict of values has gone beyond the moral realm and extended into every realm of human life; complicatedness, the conflict of values that occurred in traditional society still occurs in contemporary society, but there appears a very complicated situation, now there appears divergences, contradictions and opposites, the conflict of values occurs between different ideologies and codes of conduct in different systems of value, and between non native and native values in the same society, between traditional and modern values because the twentieth century is a period of transition; profoundness, traditional conflict of morality occurred mainly in the process of choosing and deciding how to act, people's ideas of value about what were good or evil usually were defined, while the contemporary conflict of values occurs not only in the process of choice and decision, but also in the depth of ideology, as a consequence, it is difficult for the people to form clear and definite concept about what is value and what is more valuable; continuousness, the contemporary conflict of values occurs continuously because it is difficult to be solved, and people are often confronted with it because it takes place in every realm.

The proverbs in relation to the ongoing conflict of values are: 38,39,40,41,42,43,44,45,46,47,48,49,50,51,52,53,54,55,56,57,58,59,60,61,62,63.

These proverbs about ongoing conflicts of value-motivated proverbs are all from Wole Soyinka's *Kongi's Harvest*. This play is Wole Soyinka's political satire. It deals with the story of President Kongi, the dictator of an African developing country, trying to modernize it after deposing King Oba Danlola, who is being in detention. Kongi demands that Danlola presents him with a ceremonial yam at a dinner to indicate his abdication. Daoudu, Danlola's nephew and heir, grows prized yam on his farm. Daoudu's lover Segi owns a bar where Daoudu spends most of his time. She is revealed to have been Kongi's former lover. As the different tribes are resisting unification, Kongi tries to reach his goal by any necessary means, including forcing government

⁵⁵⁴ Jiang Chang, Feng Jun, "Contemporary Conflict of Values" Online/
<http://www.bu.edu/wcp/Papers/Valu/ValuChan.htm>. (March 2015).

officials to wear traditional African outfits and seeking advice from the man he deposed.

As in the previous subsection devoted to the analysis of proverbs, here again we are going to show how Wole Soyinka, through the use of proverbs in the mouths of his characters creates meanings to reveal and satirize Kongi's dictatorial regime. As we mentioned above, in *Kongi's Harvest*, the conflict derives from Kongi's effort to have the traditional ruler, Oba Danlola, hand over the new yam to him as a mark of capitulation and acceptance of his prime position in the land – an action which would then invest Kongi as an embodiment of the spirit of the harvest. Kongi seeks the fusion of both civil and traditional powers in his person.

In *Kongi's Harvest*, proverbs from (38) to (50) are in the first section, 'Hemlock'. It serves as a prologue to the play, and also as an exposition of the whole action of the play. 'Hemlock,' the opening section, is a thematic microcosm of the whole play. In this part of the play, it is written that, Oba Danlola shoulders a heavy responsibility of saving the state and its people from the tyrannical rule of Kongi. Suggesting poison and anarchy in Ismland, it foreshadows political instability and social disorder. The satirical version of the national anthem shows that the people in a state of Ismland are not happy and are terribly afraid of Kongi's regime.

The issue of the ongoing conflict of values means conflict between the old and the new, and the emergence of dictators into the political scenes of the country. There is conflict between Kongi who represents the so-called modern leadership, and Danlola who represents the traditional institution.

We find it better to mention that, such a conflict occurs only at the important period of the country, post-independence. In the pre-colonial period traditional rulers did not experience such opposition to modern leadership, and during the colonial period traditional rulers and colonial governments worked in harmony, without opposition.

Furthermore, the heads, both Kongi and Danlola, and the members of the two groups, traditional and modern, spare no moments to remind the readers and audience, of their proverbs, of the power and influence of the institution they represent.

Proverbs (38), (39) and (40) deal with the same aspects of the issue, the ongoing conflict of values. They are used on the same page. To this effect, we find it better to analyze them together in order to avoid fragmenting the ideas of the action of the play. In fact, these proverbs are: (38) '...an elder is an elder, and a king does not become a

menial just because he puts down his crown to eat” (Superintendent, 62); (39) “A shilling’s vegetable must appease a halfpenny spice”; (Danlola, 62); (40) “The king is good.” (Sarumi, 62)

To begin with proverb (38) “...an elder is an elder, and a king does not become a menial just because he puts down his crown to eat”, it is used by Superintendent as the very first speech delivered by known characters in the play. In addition, this proverb and the whole excerpt in which it is used come after Danlola’s group breaks into the satirical and ironic anthem to Kongi. The essential ideas in Danlola’s anthem are that, every desirable end exacts its price. This applies not only to Kongi’s self imposed assignment but also to the equally task of trying to unseat him, a task which ends in disaster, thus exacting its price without the satisfaction of achieving the end; Danlola’s anthem is also a mockery of the taper’s efforts – ‘his shattered shins’ – the sweetest wine has flowed useless away. Danlola’s satirical anthem portrays the prevailing political situation. Through the satirical and ironic anthem, Danlola and followers portray their old regime in the words which the ‘new race’ would use. Oba Danlola repeats this style of ironical-self mockery frequently in the play.

Through the use of proverb (38), “...an elder is an elder, and a king does not become a menial just because he puts down his crown to eat,”⁵⁵⁵ Superintendent at this level of the play seems to be in the situation of ambiguity as to the attitude to have, because Danlola and Kongi reveal similarity in the sense that he sees them sharing the same love for power, position, and public adoration. Through his proverb, Superintendent recognizes and remembers Danlola’s traditional power despite his situation of being in prison. At this level of the play, circumstances make Superintendent accept or refuse both Kongi and Danlola. Proverb (38) exemplifies the reverence of the elder, kingship even though those who handle power are in crisis. This proverb is said at the very beginning for possible change that may come in the political situation of a country.

In addition, this proverb can be viewed as fulfilling the function of persuasion; it is one of Kongi’s strategies. This is to be considered when Danlola and his group manoeuvre to avoid subjugation, replacement of their old system by Kongi’s new system. That is the essence of proverbs (39) and (40) which in words are: ‘A shilling’s vegetable must appease a halfpenny spice’; (Danlola, 62); “The king is god.”

⁵⁵⁵ Wole Soyinka, “Kongi’s Harvest” in *Collected Plays 2*, op. cit., p. 62.

(Sarumi, 62). The use of proverbs (39) and (40) shows Danlola's acceptance of Kongi's modern system, and his struggle to present itself as a plausible system, wrongly cast away and one that stubbornly refuses to be eroded by the formidable forces and the coercive powers of the modern state. In the face of this, Superintendent in his second speech, addressed to Danlola says: "It won't work, Kabayesi, it won't work. Every evening you gather your friends together and desecrate the National Anthem. It has to stop!"

Superintendent stops royal drums.

The Oba's wrong use of Isma's national anthem is an exposition of the disdain he holds for the new state.

Proverb (41) is "What is a king without a clan of elders?" (Danlola, 63). This wise saying refers to the presence and work of elders in his traditional ruling system, that is also a kingdom. In addition, this proverb portrays the importance of elders to the king. In fact, an elder is one of the respected older people who have influence and authority. This shows also a kind of much consideration and reverence to elderly in politics. Additionally, in past Yoruba male children will greet their elders by laying down on the ground in front of their parent/ elders, and female will kneel on both knees with her hands back and greet them with "Good morning ma/sir. The elder will place their hand on the child's head as they speak, they will then wait to be told to stand before you get up from the ground.

The grammatical structure of Proverb (41) 'What is a king without a clan of elders?' is a question. In fact, Danlola uses it as his refusal answer to Superintendent's intention to tell Secretary to put Danlola in a different section of the camp; he considers that the 'elders', who are the members of Danlola's group give him force and strength to continue his opposition actions. In addition, Danlola reveals that the elders deserve great consideration in his group as the Reformed Aweri Fraternity do in Kongi's group.

There is a certain number of information in the context of the conversations between Danlola and Superintendent, leading ultimately to the use of proverb (41) by Danlola. First of all, just after Superintendent stops royal drums, Danlola calls him 'the slave in khaki and brass buttons' to Kongi naturally; then, he licks his masters' spit and boast; last not least, Danlola says that they "chew the same tobacco". The last declaration of Danlola reinforces the idea of likeness in both Danlola's and

Kongi's administration and rule. Similarities in their ruling systems reveal the very low economic status of Danlola's and Kongi's respective members of the groups. However, nothing specific is said about the economic state of the traditional Chief of Isma, Oba Danlola. He can be said to be a rich person because he sustains his many wives. So also is Kongi, the political leader of Isma, as is always the case in totalitarian societies, the coffers of the state is somehow merged with the personal purse of the ruler.

Furthermore, proverbs (42) 'The nude shanks of a king is not a sight for children-it will blind them', (43) 'Wise hands turn away until he's wiped his bottom', (44) 'A crown is a burden when the king visits his favourite's chambers. When the king's wrapper falls off in audience, wise men know he wants to be left alone' deal with the same aspects of the issue of on going conflict of value. They are also used by Danlola on the same page in the play.

Proverb (42) 'The nude shanks of a king is not a sight for children-it will blind them' makes reference to a human body part, the shanks, its state and condition of being nude, with the view to evoking its sense of having no protection, having no means of defense, unprovided with needful or desirable means of sustenance, exposed, destitute, etc. In addition, this proverb also exhibits "cause-effect" relationships as it thematises the children. The literary meaning is that the king's naked part between the knee and the ankle causes blindness to children; secret part of the human body should not be shown to other persons, publically, and not to children. In addition, the use of this proverb means, the traditional king's misfortune is a danger for the all community under his rule and government. The action of the play *Kongi's Harvest* in which this proverb is used presents Superintendent who removes the wrapper from Danlola, the traditional king to show that King Danlola is no longer the supreme authority in the land. This action is a curse because in the tradition of the people, this is an affront on the king. We may also evoke the very bad and unhuman conditions of life for political detainees.

In the context of the play, Wole Soyinka puts this proverb in the mouth of his character, Danlola to reveal the idea of the preservation of traditional institutions and principles, and the possibility for its harmonious coexistence with modern political

system, both, the continuity, stability of the kingdom, and the better conditions of life for the people.

As for proverb (43) 'Wise hands turn away until he's wiped his bottom', it also makes reference to the human body part, the hand, and its qualification, that is wise, to express the idea of a common-sensed man who is always successful, perseveres and gives up only when he attains his objectives. Through this proverb, Danlola is now expressing his unwillingness for destitution. Though in prison, he leads his resistance.

Proverb (44) is 'A crown is a burden when the king visits his favourite's chambers. When the king's wrapper falls off in audience, wise men know he wants to be left alone'. This proverb makes reference to one of the constitutional principles in a kingdom, that is to say, the distinction between the king as a person and the crown as an institution, with a special emphasis on the crown. In fact, the crown is an ornamental head-dress of gold, jewels, ect., worn by a sovereign ruler. It also means royal power. In addition, the crown as an institution is the head of the judiciary, and justice is administrated in the sovereign's name. He symbolizes the stability and durability of kingdom institutions, and commands the loyalty and devotion of the people. Paradoxically, in the proverb under analysis, the crown becomes a burden, that is a heavy load and something difficult to bear for Danlola, the traditional king. In the proverb, 'a crown is a burden' is a metaphor which means Danlola's regretful acceptance of the death of his traditional authority. The second statement of this proverb is a rhetorical address of the now defeated king, Danlola to the elders who are also members of his group to tell them 'he wants to be left alone'.

Furthermore, proverb (45) 'Only a foolish child lets a father prostrate to him' makes reference to kinship that is the relationship by blood, and also family relationship, with a special consideration of two members: a child and a father. The proverb mentions the act of prostration between them. The grammatical structure of this proverb is affirmative, and to rephrase it into the negative, we write, a common-sensed child does/ should not let her father prostrate him.

The meaning of this proverb out of the context of the play is not debatable because this sounds quiet and generally true. Even in the context of the play, the first interpretation is positive, only if Superintendent actually accepts the condition of a child that he represents and mentions in his proverb. But, his position of being the superintendent (who says the proverb) of the camp in which Oba Danlola is detained,

gives this proverb a negative meaning. The reason for this is that Superintendent works for Kongi. To this respect, he is one of the members and supporters in Kongi's group. In addition, the use of this proverb establishes and defines also the nature of the relation between Superintendent and Kongi: slave and master. Superintendent simply implements the orders he receives from his master through the secretary. We may qualify this saying as a euphemistic proverb, and it is used to fulfill the function of persuasion to Danlola so that he ends his resistance, accepts and brings the New Yam to Kongi in his hands and in the presence of the people publically.

Through this proverb and others, we come to a closer knowledge of Kongi as a leader who is detached from the people, and speaks over and above the head of his followers. The ideas mentioned earlier reveal that, a mock prostration from Danlola to Kongi scares the Superintendent, who in spite of new loyalty to Kongi still maintains a passive respect for the king. Another aspect is that, this proverb is the result of Oba Danlola's proverbic wisdom; he gets the Superintendent to cower to him and, abandoning his officious language, to revert to the speech of the sons of the soil: 'I am only the fowl-droppings that stuck to your slippers when you strolled in the backyard. The child is nothing; it is only the glory of his forebears that the world sees and tolerates in him...Please – plead with him . Intercede for me.'⁵⁵⁶

In addition, the idea of passive respect of Superintendent for Danlola, the king, is also revealed in proverbs (46) 'If the baobab shakes her head in anger, what chance has the rodent when an ear-ring falls', and (47) 'A father employs only a small stick on his child, he doesn't call in the policeman to take him to goal'. To begin with proverb (46), it is a metaphorical proverb. It uses the images of the baobab with the action of shaking her head in anger; the rodent that falls like an ear-ring. In the context of the play, the baobab refers to Danlola, whereas the rodent is used for Superintendent. The baobab tree is believed to be a sacred in the Yoruba culture. In greater part of the Yoruba area of West Africa lies in a region which was covered with some of the best tropical forests and luxuriant savanna lands of Africa. The forests of the Yorubaland is home of famous trees such as, the everlasting baobab trees, some of which could live for four hundred years. It is also one of the longest lived trees in the world. In addition, the baobab tree has an enormous trunk with tapering branches and can attain a maximum height of seventy five feet and maximum diameter of sixty feet

⁵⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 65-6.

around the truck. The rodent is a small gnawing mammal of an order that includes rats, mice, squirrels, hamsters, porcupines, and their relatives, distinguished by strong constantly growing incisors teeth. Proverb (46) is used by Sarumi to her father Danlola, to plead for Superintendent who asks this. He says: ‘Please – plead with me. Intercede for me’⁵⁵⁷. Superintendent sees himself in a dangerous and uncomfortable situation between Kongi from whom, disobedience (to Kongi) which synonymous with his continual familiarity and true respect for Danlola will cost him his job, when he says to Danlola: You want to cost me my job do you?; and Danlola, Superintendent is of curse on his head. In proverb (45), he refuses to be a foolish child, and asks Danlola to prostrate to him.

Proverb (47) ‘A father employs only a small stick on his child, he doesn’t call in the policeman to take him to goal’ is also used by Sarumi in furtherance of his plead with her father Danlola not resort to hard means to redress errors of Superintendent. Danlola should not make use of all his energy to redress the mistakes of Superintendent. Otherwise, this would lead to the destruction of Superintendent. Literally this proverb may also mean, a responsible father educates his child without intermediaries.

As for proverbs (48) ‘Don’t pound the king’s yam with a small pestle’ and (49) ‘The king’s umbrella gives no more shade’, they are said respectively by Sarumi and Drummer. These two proverbs deal with the same aspect of the on going conflict of value. They are also used on the same page in the play. This aspect is, the imminent, now pronounced decline and end of Danlola’s both, divine and spiritual rights, and traditional royal authority. The author uses different images to show the replacement of the old traditional political system by the so-called new modern political system. In proverb (48) we have ‘the king’s yam’ and ‘a small pestle’. There is opposition between these images. That is why, grammatical structure of this proverb is a negative instruction. We rephrase this proverb as follows: the king’s yam must not be pounded in a small pestle. In Yoruba culture, the yam was considered the king of the crops. For three or four moons it demanded hard work and constant attention. The young tendrils were protected from earth-heat with rings of sisal leaves. The yam was stacked, first with little sticks and later with tall and big tree branches. The yam stood for manliness. ‘The king’s yam’, this proverb refers to, symbolizes memoirs of community

⁵⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 66.

gatherings and celebrations. As for 'a small pestle', it is a tool for pounding substances in a mortar. To this respect, 'Don't pound the king's yam in a small pestle' sounds the metaphoric instruction for addressing all the people, and in particular those who intend to detribalize traditional royal authority and the kingdom stability, reduce its celebrity, limit and stop its continuity, to destroy and abandon their own plan; this means also that, they must not go ahead on their road to dethrone king Oba Danlola, and not accept Kongi come to the throne by force. In addition, proverb (48) is the direct reply and answer of Sarumi, Danlola's son, to Ogbo Aweri's say. He is Head of the Oba's defunct Conclave of Elders:

Ogbo Aweri: Did you see us/ Lead twins by the hands? Did you not see us/ Shade the albino's eyes/ From the hard sun, with a fan/ Of parrots feathers? Even so did the god enjoin/ Whose hands of chalks/ Have formed the cripple/ And human bat of day.
Sarumi: Don't pound the king's yam/ With a small pestle [...] It cannot match an elder's rags.⁵⁵⁸

This speech of Agbo Aweri sounds as a dream, a vision, and a prediction for the exact happenings to Oba Danlola. He saw themselves leading twins by the hand. He uses a repetition to insist on this fact. The twins are Danlola and Kongi. He adds that, he saw themselves keep direct rays of light from the hard sun. This reveals the continuation of Danlola's regime by Kongi, as far as the leader's opinion of the people is concerned. In other words, people will live the same conditions, sufferance, under Kongi as they did under Danlola. Kongi and Danlola are seemingly the same. The ruling body changes, but the wrong principles of governing remain the same. In addition, before Agbo Aweri's prediction of Danlola's imminent dethrone, Drummer and Agbo Aweri himself revealed Danlola's end through the following dialogue which seems to be contradicted by Sarumi because of kinship.

Drummer: I saw a strange sight/ In the market this day/ The day of the feast of Agemo/ The sun was high/ And the king's umbrella/ Beneath it...
Sarumi: We lift the king's umbrella/ Higher than men/ But it never pushes the sun in the face.
Drummer: I saw a strange sight/ In the market this day/ The sun was high/ But I saw no shade/ From the king's umbrella.
Ogbo Aweri: This is the last/ That we shall dance together/ This is the last the hairs/ Will lift on our skin/ And draw together/ When the gbedu rouses/ The dead in oshugbo.
Sarumi: This is the last our feet/ Shall speak to feet of the dead/ and the unborn cling/ To the hem of our robes/ Oh yes, we know the say/ We wore out looms/ With weaving robes

⁵⁵⁸ Ibid., pp. 67-68.

for kings/ But I ask, is popoki/ The stuff to let down/ To unformed fingers clutching up/
At life?...⁵⁵⁹

This excerpt shows also that Danlola's supporters such as Drummer, Sarumi and Ogbo Aweri are aware of the imminent downfall of Danlola. They do not hesitate to express the awareness and feeling before Danlola himself. This feeling becomes a reality when Danlola officially says, almost to himself that "This dance is the last/ Our feet shall dance together/ The royal python may be good/ At hissing, but it seems/ The scorpion's tail Is fire."⁵⁶⁰

Danlola's speech is actually a fable-riddle-excerpt. It uses animals such as python and scorpion, well known, for their characteristics of killing prey respectively by twisting around it and crushing it; and by poisonous sting in its long tail. As a riddle, the answer of this excerpt is Kongi. Danlola attributes him the same qualities with a python and a scorpion. One may read this part of the story with the feeling that Danlola and Kongi play the dialectic of insult that is also mutual accusation.

Furthermore, Danlola's own expression of the end of his traditional authority ultimately leads Drummer to cry through the use of proverb (49), that is "The king's umbrella gives no more shade". The essential idea is in the use the image of "umbrella". In fact, Drummer expresses their reality from now on: they are exposed, they miss the king's protection.

Proverb (50) "The wayward child admits his errors and begs his father's forgiveness." This proverb rhetorically emphasizes the logical and true process that leads to forgiveness. In addition, it presents the category of person in need of forgiveness, "the wayward child", and the one he begs it to, "his father". In other words, this proverb defines the condition for a wayward child obtains forgiveness of his own errors: he must admit them. In this proverb, forgiveness is the logical consequence of errors admission. This sounds as a general truth. The two persons involved in this process are the wayward child and the father. It is true. The truth resides in the fact of true and real will from hear, good conscience motivate a wayward child begs forgiveness of his errors, and true love motivates the father forgives him his errors.

⁵⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 67.

⁵⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 68.

But, in the context of the play, especially the action in which this proverb is used, the involvement of a wayward child and the father in the process of errors forgiveness, gives the proverb a negative meaning. In fact, this proverb is used by Fourth. He is one of the members of the Reformed Aweri Fraternity which is Kongi's group. To this effect, the proverb under consideration is used by Kongi, through his second mouth. In addition, through this proverb, Kongi asks Danlola to admit his own errors and begs him for forgiveness. The ideas that we have evoked mean, proverb (50) 'The wayward child admits his errors and begs his father's forgiveness' fulfills the functions of both political persuasion and pressure to Danlola so that, after the high dose of persuasion and pressure, and during the imminent festival he brings the new yam to Kongi with his own hands, freely and in the presence of the people. In the mind of Kongi, this act will prove the practice of true democracy in the country, and will actually be accepted by all the people and for all the people.

Furthermore, proverbs (51) '...if you have money you can live like a king' and (52) 'If a detainee pays your price you'll see to his comfort' portray the honour and dignity attributed to the possession of money, and getting very rich very quickly dishonestly, especially through bribery. They thematize money having, a good condition and way to living in the same manner as a king. We infer that if a person practices corruption in the community depicted in the play through these proverbs, good fortune, honour, reverence, esteem, credit and all sorts of privilege will be his. In addition, corruption and its result which is the fact of possessing much money, dishonestly obtained is a sine qua non to luxurious dishonest life, such as having a full sex-life by issuing week-end permits to someone else wives, always having a wrong decent meat for one's stomach.

In the context of the play, these two proverbs are used by Fifth, one of the Aweris, intellectual instruments, supporters and workers for Kongi during the important planning session, devoted to the finding of an image for the imminent festival of yam. Through the use of this proverbs, Fifth exposes and denounces the wrongdoings of Kongi's dictatorship, and his right-hand, Secretary who is taking advantage of his privileges position; though he takes bribes. He is a bribe-collector. Fifth is claiming for better conditions that his work to Kongi deserves, such as being paid for his services, having decent meal. Unfortunately, his claim sounds as an envy for those who practices corruption. To this respect, he is himself ready to practice corruption. In

addition, the immediate facts which lead Fifth say “If you have money, you can live like a king” and “If a detainee pays your price you’ll see to his comforts” are revealed. In fact, the Organizing Secretary displays much ease and skill in operating in the code of the corrupt. In exchange of money, he gives detainees under his comfort. He receives as well as huge bribes from visitors to the President, and much financial gain through his organization of the festival.

In addition, through the use these proverbs (51) and (52) in *Kongi’s Harvest*, Wole Soyinka projects the reason for increase in crime and corruption as a result of the people’s replicating what they see in the lifestyle of their leaders. However a minority revolts against this system in order to restore the moral fibre of the society. This rebellion is linked to the writer’s aesthetic writing and political activism.

For more details and for a better understanding of facts during the planning session, the following extract from the play will disclose some motivations and effects in relation with these two proverbs:

Fourth: The subject is an image for the Reformed Aweri Fraternity of which you are a member in your waking moments.

Fifth: And why do we need an image?

Third: Will you for Kongi’s sake stop repeating that question?

Fifth: When will you learn not to speak for Kongi?

Fourth: Is this yet another effort to divert this discussion?

Fifth: There is no discussion. Until Kongi makes up his mind just what image he is going to be this time, you can do nothing. I am going back to sleep.

First: The emphasis of our generation is – youth. Our image therefore should be a kind of youthful elders of the state. A conclave of modern patriarchs.

Third: Yes, yes. Nice word patriarch, I’m glad you used it. Has a reverent tone about it. Very nice indeed, very nice.

Second: I agree. Conjures up quite an idyllic scene.

Third: Yes, yes, children handing the patriarch his pipe at evening, crouching at his feet to sip raindrops of wisdom.

Fifth: And dodging hot ashes as age shakes his rheumatic hand and the pipe overturns?

Third: You seem to turn a sour tongue on every progress we make in the discussion. Why don’t you simply stay asleep?

Fifth: When the patriarch overturns his pipe, make way. It is no time for piety.

Third: Well, now you’ve let off your crosswinds of advice, *I hope your stomach pipes you sweeter to sleep.*

[...]

Fourth: Now, a systematic examination of the data. *What have we got on your plates?*

Fifth: *A few crumbs of mouldy bread isn’t it?*

Third: What did you say?

Fifth: *I said a few crumbs of bread. What else do we ever get on our plates?*

Fourth: Can’t you keep your mind on the subject? I used a common figure of speech and you leap straight onto the subject of food.

Fifth: If your mind wasn’t licking round the subject all the time how come you always pick that kind of expression?

Sixth: He’s right. It was a most unfortunate choice of words – *what have we got on our plates? After several days of slow starvation* what answer do you expect?

Third: Can we return to the subject? We need a way to persuade that old reactionary to...

Fifth: Starve him. Try starving him to death!

[...]

Fourth: And Danlola, the retrogressive autocrat, will with his own hands presents the Leader with the New Yam, thereby acknowledging the supremacy of the State over his former areas of authority spiritual or secular. From then on, the State will adopt towards him and to all similar institutions the policy of glamourized fossilism.

Second: How will you make the king take part in this – public act of submission?

Fourth: Just what is the difficulty? I have outlined the main considerations haven't I?

Second: Outlining the considerations is not exactly a solution.

Fourth: You all expect me to do all the thinking don't you?

Fifth: Don't look at me. I've told you I can't think on an empty stomach.

Third: Can't you lay off your filthy stomach?

Fifth: I can't. Why the hell couldn't Kongi do his fasting alone? I'll tell you why. *He loves companions in misery.*

First: Look man, enough of you. You didn't have to come.

Fifth: Yah? I'd like to see any of us refusing that order. And anyway, he said nothing of fasting at the time. Just disputations and planning.

Third: Don't you arrogate yourselves to being his companions in misery. You get something to eat. Kongi doesn't eat at all.

Fifth: All part of his diabolical cleverness. *A little bit of dry bread every day just to activate the stomach devils. Much better if we'd gone all out like him.*

First: Hey, go easy man. You're asking for P.D. if you go on in that tone.

Fifth: At least you get fed. And *if you have money you can life like a king* – ask our dear Organizing Secretary if you don't believe me.

Secretary: You are suggesting something nasty Sir?

Fifth: Don't act innocent with me. *If a detainee pays your price you'll see to his comforts.* I bet our royal prisoner has put on weight since he came under your charge.

Secretary: This is slander.

Fifth: Sue me.

Secretary: I refuse to listen to any more of this.

Fifth: And a full-sex too I bet. Are you going to tell me you don't issue week-end permits to his wives?

Secretary: *You are taking advantage of your privileged position.*

Fifth: I waive it you shameless bribe-collector. Say whatever is on your mind, or take me to court. I waive my philosophic immunity.

Secretary: All right. So *I take bribes.* It only puts me on the same level with you.

Third: What!

Second: *I smell corruption.*

Sixth: Let's hear it. Come on, out with it.

Secretary: *You've been bought. You've all been bought.*

Fourth [on his feet.]: Withdraw that statement!

Third: Immediately.

Secretary: [...] Of course you've been bought. Bribed with the bribe of an all-powerful signature across a timeless detention order.

Fifth: I quite forget *my hunger* for while.

Third: Will you *leave your stomach out of it!*

Sixth: Why does that always set you raving?

Third: *I suffer from ulcers.*

Sixth: Don't we all? *Mine are crying out for a decent meal.*

Third: *I tell you it's my ulcers.*

Fifth: *Working on that wrong person.* Now, before I tell you what to do, *we must settle on a fee.*

Secretary: You ...want me to pay you?

Fifth: Naturally. I am a professional theoretician. *I must be paid for my services.*⁵⁶¹

⁵⁶¹ Ibid., pp. 71-84.

In this excerpt from the play in which we read the two proverbs we have analyzed, it is revealed that there are similarities between Danlola's and Kongi's regimes. For example, the Reformed Aweri Fraternity which is Kongi's intellectual instrument of propaganda and pressure is in no way different from Oba's Conclave of Elders. They all live in misery; they are not paid for their services; they do not have decent meal; they always starve and suffer from ulcers because of their stomachs claim for food; they are ready to practice corruption for a better life as their leaders; few of them can resist corruption; they all suffer but a minority only denounce the leaders wrongdoings; critics to the leaders is synonymous with asking for preventive detention; the new system needs an image through which Kongi will be seen stronger than Danlola, all the people, even the institutions.

Furthermore, proverb (53) '...all harvest must await its season' makes reference to the cultivation of the soil, and life principle through the terms harvest and season. They respectively mean, season for cutting or gathering in grain and other food crops, consequences of action or behavior; and period suitable for something. This reference to agricultural activity and its season is made with the view to evoke its sense – there is time for everything; the harvest never comes immediately after planting for, while the sowed seed is under the soil, there is seedtime and harvest; patience to avoid premature harvest; one reaps, harvests what he once sowed. To this respect, the proverb discourages wrongdoings and implies the need for everyone to be only doer of positive actions.

In the context of the play, proverb (53) '...all harvest must await its season' is used by Daodu as a reply to Segi in their ecstasy to oppose the dictator, Kongi. This proverb exemplify the value of patience that Daodu and Segi should prove in their process of opposition to Kongi leading ultimately to the restoration of traditional rule. The experience of patience needed by Daodu and Segi is also a methodology chosen by Daodu in order to be successful in their attempt to limit Kongi's rule. Both Daodu and Segi involve hopefully in the conspiracy against the dictator ruler, Kongi. The proverb is so used to show the value of patience Daodu needs for the risk he takes between Danlola from whom he is heir to the traditional throne, and Kongi who is deposing Danlola. To this respect the proverb under consideration is used to teach and implements the virtue of patience which is a guarantee for the denouement of the on going conflict between Danlola and Kongi for the benefit of all the people. In addition,

this proverb reveals life principle, that is everything has a beginning and an end. This is the time of Kongi's harvest. Kongi wants Danlola brings him the New Yam with his own hands in the presence of the people to show his agreement with the replacement of his old traditional rule by the new, modern system of government. Danlola and Segi's involvement works for the failure of Kongi's expectation. This will lead to the restoration of the kingdom with Daodu, Danlola's heir to the throne.

Before Segi and Danlola's ecstasy, in his conversation with Secretary, Daodu accepts the mission of mediating the conflict between Danlola and Kongi. That mediation consists in making his uncle co-operate with Kongi, accept to bring the New Yam to indicate his abdication, as a condition for them (Danlola, Daodu, Segi's father and the other detainees) obtaining Kongi's act of clemency, which in fact remains a confidential decision. Daodu is advocating for the individual's fundamental rights; he is also trying to save tradition; and risking his life for the people.

Additionally to the preparation for his role, Daodu has undertaken extensive travel and has come home to use his knowledge for the benefit of his people. Now, the political struggle is located firmly within the arena of modernity; for the essential conflict is being played out chiefly between two versions of modernity: one represented by Kongi, which entails the production of modernity as a discourse of personal power, and the other embodied by Daodu, with a collectivist and egalitarian objective and also anchored in the historical, cultural and political practices of the nation, emerging from within rather than being imported from without. Unlike the former, the latter is a hybridity that is functionally a continuation of the communalism of the old order, the world of Oba Danlola and his brothers Obas – hence, a discourse of postcolonial modernity that is a development of the internal logic of tradition itself. What is thus proposed is a conception of modernity and development in which these are not necessarily antithetical to tradition but are, rather, an elaboration in new times and evolved over its totality of historical existence. In this regard, Soyinka posits the idea of development as history, as a movement from within the indigenous zones of temporality rather than as a structural synchronic transfer of terms from a privileged external cultural site, for the latter simulates, at the level of theory, the tyranny of Kongism. This consonant with Soyinka's objections to the Kongism of theoretical and intellectual formation he sees in the Marxist critical approach applied to African literature. In claiming an interpretative monology over truth, the movement enacts in

the sphere of knowledge the Kongism of the postcolonial state. Here, Soyinka is in touch with Michel Foucault's argument that the production of knowledge is itself implicated in the politics of power.⁵⁶²

Let us contextualize the proverb under analysis in the roles of characters, and try to comment upon the facts and events in relation to the proverb.

[Daodu turns to meet Segi, smiles to break her anger.]
 Daodu: My eyes of rain, Queen of Harvest night.
 Segi [slowly relenting, half ashamed.]: I was so afraid.
 Daodu: There is nothing more to fear.
 Segi: I will never be afraid again.
 Daodu: Two less for Kongi's grim collection. I am glad the live one is your father.
 Segi: I feel like dancing naked. If I could again believe I would say it was a sign from heaven.
 Daodu: Yes, if I were awaiting a sign, this would be it.
 Segi: Come with me Daodu.
 Daodu: Now? There is still much to do before you meet us at the gates.
 Segi: Come through the gates tonight. Now I want you in me, my Spirit of Harvest.
 Daodu: Don't tempt me so hard. I am swollen like prize yam under earth, but *all harvest must await its season*.
 Segi: There is no reason for seeds bursting.
 Daodu: My eyes of kernels, I have much preparation to make.
 Segi: I shall help you.
 Daodu: Let me preach hatred Segi. If I preached hatred I could match his barren marathon, hour for hour, torrent for torrent...
 Segi: Preach life Daodu, only life...
 Segi [rises.]: My eyes were open to what I did. Kongi was a great Man, and I loved him.
 Daodu: [...] What is there strong enough about just living and loving? What!
 Segi: If will be enough that you erect a pulpit against him, even for a moment.
 Daodu [resignedly.]: I hate to be a mere antithesis to your Messiah of Pain.⁵⁶³

This excerpt from the play shows the context of proverb (53) "...all harvest must await its season". In fact, the action of the play shows that, Daodu detests Kongi and his political stands; his level of confidence is not appreciative. His will to power is not strong. He needs someone to back him. Segi supports him by her actions and words, and mobilizes him as an incarnation of Ogun principle. Segi calls Daodu "my Spirit of Harvest" and elevates his mind to have confidence. She invites him to join

⁵⁶² Mpalive-Hangson Msiska, *Postcolonial Identity in Wole Soyinka* (New York: Editions Rodopi, 2007), pp.88-9.

⁵⁶³ Ibid., pp.97-9.

with her that night. By inviting him, she sows the seed of confidence in him. She become a symbol of life as opposed to Kongi, a symbol of death. In anger Daodu yells, but Segi pacifies and convinces him to preach only life. Daodu's hatred and anger at injustice is part of Ogun principle. Similarly, Segi connotes another aspect of the principle, that is, creation and love. When Daodu and Segi are separated, they acquire the principle of party. Nevertheless, when they are together, the principle becomes whole. Daodu celebrates and finds comfort to Segi, a courtesan and Kongi's ex-mistress. She has performed and leads a respectable life in the society. Intoxicated by her love, she justifies her acts of selling herself to others for livelihood, whereas the politicians and cruel dictators like Kongi, sell others' flesh to raise themselves. In addition, the dominant use of the economy of sexuality is never as fully dramatized as in Soyinka's play. Moreover, in Soyinka's portrayal of Segi's numerous roles in the resistance movement, we have a positive subjectivity whose sole fixity is the desire for change and transformation. We are given the impression that she had been there during Kongi's anticolonial struggle, believing in Kongi's ability to deliver a genuine form of postcolonial freedom, but that she was let down as Kongi increasingly began to value blind loyalty over and above the independence of mind that has so obviously characterized her since her entry in the struggle for the liberation of Isma from colonial rule.

In addition, Segi's inclusion in the future of Isma indicates that the exclusion from Kongi's predominantly masculine leadership-cycle of women such as Segi who had contributed to the nationalist victory could be reserved. Postcolonial dictatorship is presented as not only the absence of general freedoms, but also as lacking in gender equality. This is abundantly clear from the masculinist gathering that is the Aweri Reformed Fraternity. In this respect, though, Kongi's gender ideology is consonant with tradition, the traditional Council itself being composed of men only. It is in this regard that Segi and Daodu must be seen as leading in not only a new formal democratic politics but also a new politics of gender in which leadership will be shared among the ablest and most committed men and women of Isma. Soyinka does admit to privileging a particular form of female agency as a redemption force, installing womanhood as very much antithesis of masculinist tyranny over the public sphere.⁵⁶⁴

⁵⁶⁴ Mpalive-Hangson Msiska, *Postcolonial Identity in Wole Soyinka*, op. cit. pp. 90-1.

Furthermore, proverbs (55) “The ostrich also spots plumes but I’ve yet to see that wise bird leave the ground” (56) “When a dog hides a bone does he not throw up sand?” make reference to two animals: “the ostrich”, in the proverb, as collocates with “spots plumes” and “not leave the ground”; the second animal is “a dog”, in the proverb, as collocates with “hides a bone” and “does he not throw up sand?”. The meaning of these two proverbs is attributable to the qualities of the animals they refer to. First of all, in “Animal Alchemy Symbols”, the ostrich is symbol of pride, fertility, luck, and simplicity, truth, happiness, avoidance. Alchemical legend has it that the stomach of the ostrich was capable of digesting anything. One of the physical particularities of the ostrich that stagger scientists is, on the wings are two plumeless shafts like large porcupine quills. These may be used in resistance attack. The ostrich is the largest bird now living. The proverb under consideration makes reference to this bird because it has plumes, but it never leaves the ground. Female ostrich deposits her eggs the sand. As for the dog, the qualities attributed to it are companionship, friendship, loyalty, protection, power of forgiveness, good intuition, keen senses and quick-learning, intelligent mind. To hide a bone, a dog goes through the sand with force, by a movement of the foot; and to find his bone he resorts to the qualities of good intuition and intelligent mind. This means, a dog cannot lose the bone he hides.

The two proverbs (55) “The ostrich also spots plumes but I’ve yet to see that wise bird leave the ground” (56) “When a dog hides a bone does he not throw up sand?” are riddle-proverbs. They are used by Danlola in reference to his determination not to leave his palace for Kongi. Through these proverbs and others in *Kongi’s Harvest*, the language of Oba Danlola has the “concreteness of metaphor and imagery”⁵⁶⁵, and among other things, especially when juxtaposed with the speeches of the new rulers, serves to expose the incomprehensible vacuity of the latter, as well as to reveal the assurance that comes from the might of tradition, though violently shaken.

Furthermore, proverb (56) is “The tortoise and the shell is full of air pockets”. Reference is made to another animal, the tortoise, in this proverb, as “shell” collocates with “the tortoise”. The sense of the proverb lies in the unity of body parts through in the cause-effect theory that if parts of a whole according to its nature, are united, the result is the continuity of its existence. In essence, the tortoise is naturally taken as a whole which cannot be separated from his own shell. This proverb too, shows the

⁵⁶⁵ Adrian Roscoe, *Mother is God* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1971), p.236.

relation between the tortoise and its shell in the sense to get the principle of life goes further. It seems clear that the tortoise owes his life to its shell. To this respect, the relationship between the tortoise and the shell symbolizes knowing how to retreat within oneself, to use one's own strengths and protect oneself from the outside world.

In the the action of the play, as it goes on, proverb (56) "The tortoise and the shell is full of air pockets" is used by Danlola to express his satisfaction to see in advance the positive product and result of his determination to resist Kongi in his attempt to replace the traditional authority that Danlola represents. This may also mean, Danlola sees in advance the failure of Kongi in his claim for Danlola presents him with the New Yam as an indication of his abdication. Kongi fails; Danlola sees his head now dances in his crown like a cola-nut in the pouch of an ikori cap.⁵⁶⁶ In addition, Danlola is successful because instead of himself, another person presents "the new yam" to Kongi. She is Segi. In this regard, Segi's contribution works in such way as to complete and help Daodu who loves her, and Danlola who considers her "a right cannibal of the female species" in their ways and strategies to see that Kongi fails with plan.

In addition, proverbs (57) "Wise birdlings learn to separate the pigeon's cooing from the shrill alarm" and (58) "The boldest hunter knows when the gun must be unspiked. When a squirrel seeks sanctuary up the iroko tree hunter's chase is ended..." are used respectively and successively by Danlola and Sarumi in their dialogue. Sarumi is a junior Oba. To this respect, their proverbs express the same idea, that is to say, the imminent triumph of Danlola's justice thanks to his determination and courage, over Kongi's injustice of seeking power. These proverbs present knowledge that comes through experience, with collocates like "wise birdlings", "pigeon's cooing" and "shrill alarm". There is also the time cause-effect relation with collocates "the boldest hunter", "the gun must be unspiked"; "a squirrel seeks sanctuary", "iroko tree" and "hunter's chase is ended".

The first category of collocates refers to sound of animal: pigeon's cooing, which is soft, and represents a person of understanding, a well-mannered person, the followers of a wise man, and also the voice of a teacher; it also denotes domestic peace. There is also a metal sound: the shrill alarm, which is a sharp sound, voice or signal to wake a person. In the play, Sarumi identifies Danlola's voice to the dawn pigeon, which is a voice of a teacher, and for peace. Danlola in his reply reinforces this idea

⁵⁶⁶ Wole Soyinka, "Kongi's Harvest" in *Collected Plays 2*, op. cit., p. 107.

through his agreement, and identifies Sarumi and the others as wise birdlings, ‘‘young birds’’; he sees in them the capacity of differencing his voice to that of another person.

The images in the second category of collocates, proverb (57) are: ‘‘the boldest hunter’’, which is indication of the hunter’s courage; explicit mention of ‘‘the squirrel seeks sanctuary’’ in ‘‘the iroko tree’’; indication of the weapon used; the consequence or effect caused is the end of hunter’s chase. The images of ‘‘the squirrel seeks sanctuary’’ and in ‘‘the iroko tree’’ deserve further comment because they are helpful in understanding the extent to which these proverbs integrate the issue of on going conflict of value and its step. In fact, to begin with ‘‘the squirrel’’, in ‘‘Animal Symbolism of the Squirrel’’, it is an animal commonly known to hide and save its food and return to it in the winter months – we take this as sign in people’s lives; a sign that it might be time to look into one’s own provisions, for example to know if it is time to consider a retirement, or if we are adequately insured.

This symbolically coincides with the old adage ‘‘what we sow is what we reap’’. What may seem like absent-mindedness is actually a strong message to us to be mindful of the metaphorical seeds people plant in their lives as they will surely reap the consequences. Squirrels are quite sociable, and are often seen in pairs or groups. Any amount of observation of the squirrel will reveal that it is a vocal creature as well, and using extensive communications – particularly when in play or when it feels threatened. The squirrel reminds people to communicate effectively with others, and to honor those around them with their presence (rather than dishonor them inappropriate or rude behavior).

In the proverb, Sarumi attributes all the qualities of the squirrel to Danlola.

As for ‘‘the iroko tree’’ where ‘‘the squirrel seeks sanctuary’’, it is a giant tree in the forest. ‘‘Iroko trees’’ are native to the west coast of Africa. In Nigeria, ‘‘the iroko tree’’ is shunned by all the Yoruba people, for in it lives the spirit of an old man who prowls about at night with a little torch and frightens travelers. Anyone who sees the Iroko-man face to face goes mad and speedily dies. Woodcutters cut the tree down and make use of the wood, this is very unlucky, as it rouses the displeasure of the Iroko-man and brings misfortune on the woodcutter and all his family. In any house which contains furniture made of Iroko-wood, there can be heard at night strange groaning and creaking noises; it is the spirit of the Iroko, imprisoned in the wood, who longs to wander about again through the forest with his little torch.

The sense of these proverbs is that, Danlola knows Kongi's strategies in his attempt to replace the traditional authority by his own modern system of government; and he in turn resorts to a kind of counter-strategies to frustrate or prevent him from his plan. In addition, Danlola and Sarumi through the use of the proverbs express their strong feelings that Kongi's ambition is falling down.

Furthermore, Daodu's proverb (59) '...a human life once buried cannot, like (...) yam, sprout anew' reinforces conviction on Kongi's down fall. In fact, this proverb makes reference to human condition opposed to the concept of dialectics. To this respect, the proverb makes use the principle of the human life negation of negation once buried. Yam sprout anew when it is buried. This is the principle of any grain. But, as for a human life, it cannot sprout anew once buried. The meaning of this proverb is that, people are limited in their capacity of doing things motivated by their strong desire for more, especially for more than is right or reasonable. In addition, this proverb also shows the notion of time and happenings accordingly. It refers to the present, and addresses the near future as period of human existence which must be saved from the errors, mistakes and futilities of the present which becomes the past.

In the context of the play, this proverb is used by Daodu as the expression of his confidence for a glorious future, with leadership which should be carried out by a responsible youth. Kongi's time is passing.

Furthermore, proverbs (60) 'A good soldier awaits starter's orders' and (61) 'When a man cannot even call briefly home to say good-bye to his native land, then hope remains his last luxury' are all used by Secretary in his address to Dende in the opening part of the 'Hangover'. The sense of this proverb lies in blame, call to order occasioned by avoidable lack of discipline, non-respect of commander mode as this is expressed 'A good soldier awaits starter's order'. In the action of the play, Secretary, with the panic of last night's feast, is talking to Dende in the sense to point the failures of the Captain Carpenter's Brigade and the Boy Scout movement during the celebration of the Festival of the New Yam. Before the festival, Secretary gave them instructions to follow at the feast. These instructions and measures might be followed so that only Oba Danlola brings the new yam to Kongi with his own hands in the presence of the people to indicate his abdication. Secretary tells the Captain:

You stick to your job. Remember, your job is to guard the new yam
every bit of the way. We don't want some fatal spice slipped into it

do we? [...]

So, keep good watch. You, run and stop Daodu's yokels at the gate. I cannot let him here – security reasons. Only state approved institutions may enter Kongi Square. Mind you they may appoint a delegate, someone to bring in the winning yam – only one!

[Dende runs off.]

[...]

[Royal drums and bugles. Enter Danlola, Sarumi, the old Aweri, and retinue. Secretary rushes to group them.]

[...]

[Enter the women, singing, led by Segi who carries Daodu's cloak. They dance onto the stage bearing mortar and pestle, cooking utensils, a cloth-beating unit, etc. They throw up their arms in derision and mock appeal to the world in general singing –]

Won ma tun gb'omiran de o

Kongi ni o je'yan oba.

[They curtsy to the seated Obas, perform a brief insulting gesture as they dance past the Reformed Aweri. The Secretary has stood speechless at the sight of Segi, now recovers himself sufficiently to approach her. Segi signals to the woman to stop.]

Secretary: What do you want here? You should not even dream of coming here.⁵⁶⁷

This excerpt writes the instructions from the hierarchy, the Secretary, to his subordinates for a successful feast. Unfortunately, they are not executed. This causes the entry of Segi in Kongi Square. As a consequence, she and the other women perform for the disgrace of Kongi; and Segi whose actions evoke a rebellion against Kongi, brings confusion in the expectations of Kongi, because instead of Danlola, and of the new yam, she presents Kongi with the decapitated head of her father on a copper salver. The play writes in the stage direction as follows:

[...Segi returns, disappears into the area of pestles. A copper of salver is raised suddenly high; it passes from hands above the women's heads; they dance with it on their heads; it is thrown from one to the other until at last it reaches Kongi's table and Segi throws open the lid. In it, the head of an old man. In the ensuing scramble, no one is left but Kongi and the head, Kongi's mouth wide open in speechless terror. A sudden blackout on both.]⁵⁶⁸

Proverb (61) "When a man cannot even call briefly home to say good-bye to his native land, then hope remains his last luxury" points to a fact of one's experience and its underlying message is that of similarity of intention in politics between Secretary and Kongi. This proverb is used by the Secretary in his address to Dende. During the conflict between Danlola and Kongi, the Secretary and Dende belong to opposite groups. The Secretary is known as Kongi's right hand. He is a salaried employee of

⁵⁶⁷ Ibid., pp. 122-124.

⁵⁶⁸ Ibid., pp. 131-2.

the State of Isma. He is stupendously rich. He is appointed by Kongi to take care of the affairs of the State, and Kongi reveals his plan and secrets to him. Whereas Dende, servant to Danlola, is poor. He is so poor that he carries all his savings with him everywhere.⁵⁶⁹ In addition, in the hours closed to the celebration of the festival, Dende plays important roles as he seems to be in the secret of Danlola. They designed and agreed on a copper salver in the colour of the ground, to be used to bring the new yam to Kongi during the harvest. We see this recipient on Segi's hands and the other women during the festival. It is also to Dende that Danlola asked to stuff the crown with cotton for the festival; while Kongi is waiting, he tells Dende that he keeps the whole nation waiting; and when it is stuffed, Danlola dances in his crown like a cola-nut in the pouch of an ikori cap. Now, in the absence of their respective leaders: Danlola and Kongi who will never come according to him, the Secretary through the use of the proverb under analysis expresses his intention to long for power thanks to which he will dominate over Dende. We also interpret the Secretary's attitudes towards Dende in the sense of seeking for the principle of unity which will then be used for the Secretary's individual political benefit. To this respect, the Secretary works in such a way that he promotes the continuation of Kongi approach for the succession of political authority. The key words to this approach are usurpation, dictatorship, etc.

The situation is that of a nation in political transition. This comes after Kongi's discomfiture which is seen in the breakdown of the structure and machinery that he has set up. He has let alone to stare at the abyss into which they are all thrown – both his henchmen and antagonists, all end up in a 'Hangover', or transition. The 'Hangover' provides what Soyinka describes as 'movements that transitional memory takes over and intimations rack [the protagonist] of that intense parallel of his progress through the gulf of transition, of the dissolution of his self and his struggle, and triumph over subsumation through the agency of will',⁵⁷⁰. The tragic consequence of Kongi's posture is seen in his progress toward the ultimate denouement. The final submission of transitional power by Danlola has provoked the offer of sacrifice; the sacrificial victim is Segi's father whose head is brought before Kongi. Usually such a sacrifice is made to a god. Kongi has not yet become one and the presentation turns into a symbolic curse. Kongi is overwhelmed by his own effervescence.

⁵⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 134.

⁵⁷⁰ Wole Soyinka, 'The Fourth Stage' in *Art, Dialogue and Outrage*, p. 27.

Furthermore, proverb (62) is ‘‘If you are headed in that direction, then that way leads to the border’’. This proverb is the last of those which are motivated by the issue of on going conflict of value. The proverb under consideration underlines the concept of the individual own responsibility to approve or disapprove the handling of affairs at any level of human life. This may also mean, an individual has the duty to, always see himself at the crossroads in life, and might notice himself saying he goes left, right or straight. In other words, he must know if he heads in a right or wrong direction. One should totally be involved in the appreciation of the direction he heads in. In case he heads in a wrong direction, he must know himself, and turn to follow the opposite and right direction which is the right.

In the action of the play, this proverb is used by Danlola in his address to the Secretary at a time the later does not expect because, after the festival, Kongi was left alone with, not the new yam he expected from Danlola. And the Secretary thought he would never meet both leaders again. He uses it in the ‘‘Hangover’’. The very surprising reappearance of Danlola interrupts Secretary’s conversation with Dende, and naturally, his intention to assist him, offer him hospitality in search of his own interests.

The ‘‘Hangover’’ is the last part of the play. The problem with the play is its ending leaves the reader confuses as to the fate of the protagonists and the state of affairs after the festival. It also leaves the reader no hope for the purging of such societies. For more details to present the situation, Segi who is courageous enough to openly oppose Kongi’s rule, is in the end victim of the predicated general clampdown indicated by the iron granting that clamps on the ground at the end of the play. Kongi’s Secretary is seen heading for the border, indicating that all is not well in Kongi’s camp. Heading to the frontier might be considered as the only condition to experience freedom, and leave in peace. For that reason, if Secretary who is Kongi’s upper hand insecurity, though he works for Kongi, we might say that the dictator is like the devil who acuses without any reason. In addition, when Danlola enters, he talks of spending the rest of his life in exile, and mentions that Sarumi has gone to abduct Daodu and to forcibly parcel him across the border. This indicates that there is a problem in Daodu’s camp. However, the idea of forcing Daodu suggests that he may not be willing to leave and that he may also have other plans.

In addition, through the use of this proverb in the mouth of Danlola, Wole Soyinka gives vent to his hatred of the whole system in Africa. He exposes and satirizes the kind of black dictatorship that is apparently new to the experience of Africa.

IV-2-3- Proverbs on Superstition, Power and Wealth.

The wording of this sub-section is very meaningful, and it inspires its subdivision into proverbs on superstition, and proverbs on power and wealth. To begin with the proverb based on superstition, we find it important to define the word superstition. The term superstition means a credulous belief or notion, not based on reason, knowledge, or experience⁵⁷¹. This word is often used pejoratively to refer to folk beliefs deemed irrational. It is also commonly applied to beliefs and practices surrounding luck, prophecy and spiritual beings, particularly irrational belief that future events can be influenced or foretold by specific unrelated prior events.

In Wole Soyinka's *The Swamp Dwellers* we find a proverb based on irrationality. This proverb (14) is "Every god shakes a beggar by the hand" (Makuri, 91). This proverb and its context rhetorically emphasizes the universality and the inconditionality of any beggar's favour and affection from God. The beggar is a blind and helpless man who in this situation undergoes grief, suffering, pain, injustices, exclusions, etc. In Wole Soyinka's *The Swamp Dwellers*, the proverb "Every god shakes a beggar by the hand" is said by Makuri to express the fatalistic acquiescence of himself and the villagers as to the arrival of the Beggar in their swampy house in the village. Makuri uses the proverb under analysis to tell the simplicity all they reflect, the uncomplicated nature of the villagers.

The irrationality of this proverb is in the fact that nobody sees the god shake a beggar's hand in real life. However, the fact that superstitions are the shadows of great truth, the swamp dwellers remain faithful to their belief. The situation before us records the persistent efforts of the villagers to receive and accept the Beggar, their willingness to give him a just treatment. In addition, the simplicity the villagers reflect, and their uncomplicated nature, not to mention their simple lives, their rituals, their observances which gave meaning to their existence, in their narratives, the European adventurers and mariners, who explored Africa in the nineteenth century, had

⁵⁷¹ Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language, op. cit.

registered a great admiration for the age-old African institutions and its self-sufficient societies. The adventurers spoke of living communities which regulated their own lives, which had evolved a working relationship with nature, which ministered to their own wants, and secured their future with their own genius.

Proverb (14) “Every god shakes a beggar by the hand” by Makuri is a positive statement for the Beggar. It means that, as the people are faithful to their god, they cannot refuse the Beggar who is shackled by every god. However, in the mind of the Beggar himself, we read that he is not willing to be intimidated by the swamp dwellers even though they try. He himself knows that he is shackled by every god.

Furthermore, the issues of wealth and power is also described in a proverb. In fact, it is proverb (16) “All women are a bloody-thirsty lot (Makuri, 105). The literary meaning of this proverb takes into account the physiology of all women body, which implicates a number of emotional and physical changes in women’s life. Uncommon symptoms that should never be ignored, and one of them is intense thirst. This fact is associated with women health. The adjective “bloody” in the proverb gives another meaning to the wise saying under analysis. It helps pass the situation from the physiological level to the nature of women, that is to say, they are all equal. The proverbial meaning of this saying is attributable to the context of the play in which it is said. In fact, proverb (16) “All women are a bloody-thirsty lot” by Makuri, an old and wise woman is used in the action about Igwezu’s deception when his twin brother, Awuchike succeeds in seducing his wife Desala, because he became very rich and Desala went with Awuchike on her own accord. It is in this essence that Makuri’s proverb (16) “All women are a bloody-thirsty lot” is based on wealth and power. In plain word, this proverb mean, women are the same. They are always unsatisfied. Whatever men do for them, they end going with other men. This proverb is the result of the old woman’s experience. In this regards, men consider it as a general truth. Old women know young girls better than themselves. From this experience of a wise old woman, people wonder if the fact that women are bloody-thirsty all the time is normal.

IV-2-4- Proverbs for Eurocentric Worldview.

Proverbs based on the European worldview implicitly or explicitly are about European history and values as “normal” and superior to others. They help to produce

and justify the European dominant position within the global capitalist system. At the heart Eurocentric proverbs lies a binary way of thinking which constructs a white, progressive, modern and civilized European identity and juxtaposes it to a black/indigenous, underdeveloped, traditional and barbarian identity.

In his play, *The Lion and the Jewel*, Wole Soyinka uses proverbs based on the Eurocentric worldview. To begin with proverb (18) ‘‘Charity begins at home’’ (Lakunle, 6, & Baroka, 47), it states the principle of administration within the family, country and continent context. Information implicitly suggested as a social function, but also political function. This proverb expresses the overriding demands of taking care of one’s family before caring other. Any person should take care of his family and other people who live close to him before helping people who are living further away or in another country.

This proverb is not from *The Bible* but it is so near to being so that it is reasonable to describe it as biblical. In addition, this proverb was first recorded in English, in slightly different form when John Wycliffe wrote: ‘Charity should begin at himself.’ Five hundred years later, Dickens said that ‘Charity begins at home, and justice begins next door.’

The proverb under analysis ‘Charity begins at home’ is actually based on Eurocentric worldview in the sense that, in the context of Wole Soyinka play, it is said by Lakunle the school teacher to Sidi the beautiful girl of the village who he wants to marry. Lakunle tells Sidi about his scientific knowledge that ‘Women have a smaller brain than men that is why they are called the weaker sex.’ He confirms that ‘the scientists have proved it’ (p. 6). Then, in relation to Sidi and other women’s habit of pounding yam, Lakunle promises that in a year or two they will have machines which will do their poundings, which will grind their pepper without it getting in their eyes. These are important details of the play action because they call Sidi’s reaction that is Lakunle means to ‘turn the whole world upside down.’ The ultimate answer of Lakunle makes things clear, and contains the proverb under consideration. He says, ‘The world? Oh, that. Well, maybe later. For now it is this village I shall turn inside out.’ Because, he says, ‘Charity begins at home.’ (p. 6)

The forthcoming proverb for Eurocentric worldview is (19) ‘‘A prophet has honor except in his own home.’’ (Lakunle, 6) This proverb is also used by Lakunle in the same action with the previous wise saying examined above. He keeps on talking with

Sidi who doubts on Lakunle's plan to change the village for the better by the means of modernity. Sidi asks Lakunle if those thoughts of future wonders – does he buys them or merely he goes mad and dreams of them. This leads Lakunle use the proverb "A prophet has honor except in his own home", which means those persons who do not know you will treat you with respect, while those who know you will treat you with contempt. In addition, through the use of this proverb, Lakunle also expresses his feeling before Sidi's doubt on his plan, and invite her to believe him.

The next proverb in relation to the Eurocentric worldview is (20) "Shame belongs only to the ignorant." (Lankule, 7) This is another proverb which the way the action of the play goes on. The situation which leads Lakunle says this proverb is linked to the facts described above. In fact, Lakunle's "A prophet has honor except in his own home" in which he means he is treated with contempt there, revolts Sidi who tells him to go to those places where women would understand him with his plan for changes. In the very comic and dramatic mood, Lakunle replicates to Sidi that, "Shame belongs only to the ignorant." (p. 7) This proverb conveys the idea of Lakunle's mockery to Sidi.

Proverb (22) is "A man shall take the woman and the two shall be together as one flesh." (Lakunle, 9) This saying is not actually a proverb; it is a verse from *The Bible* which, like many others, offer a guidance for couples, husbands, wives, newlyweds and engagement. This biblical verse works actually as a proverb because of the atmosphere of comedy which prevails in the context it is used. In a close link with all the detailed facts above, Lakunle uses these words to tell Sidi that he wants to marry him in accordance with the biblical principles.

Last but not least in this subsection, proverb (24) is "Mind your own business." (Lakunle, 33) Through this proverb, Lakunle the Westernized school teacher asks Sadiku for a respect of his privacy. He uses it to mean that Sadiku should stop meddling in what does not concern her. As the previous proverbs analyzed above, this one also, to some extent, tells the action of the play. In fact, it is clear that Lakunle and Sadiku are involved in the this action leading to the saying of this proverb. Sadiku tells Lakunle that, at this moment, his betrothed Sidi is supping with the Lion who is Baroka, her polygamist husband. Lakunle replies that they are not really betrothed as yet, he means, she is not promised yet. But it will come in time. He is sure. Sadiku asks Lakunle if he has already paid the bride-price. Lakunle who considers this practice

a thing forgotten uses the proverb under consideration, that is “Mind your own business.”

It follows that, Lakunle bursts in a sort of monologue in which he clearly expresses his Eurocentric worldview, swears that town shall see transformation, bride-price will be a thing forgotten, a motor road will pass that spot and bring the city ways to them. They will buy saucepans for all the woman, no man shall take more wives than one, the ruler shall ride cars, not horses or a bicycle at the very least. They will burn the forest, cut the trees then plan a modern park for lovers, they will print newspapers every days with pictures of seductive girls. The world will judge them by the girls that win beauty contests. Lagos will build new factories daily. They must be modern with the rest, they must reject the palm-wine habit, and take to tea, with milk and sugar. (p. 34)

IV-2-5- Proverbs for Afrocentric Worldview.

Proverbs based on Afrocentric worldview are centered around the belief that the highest value of life lies in the interpersonal relationships between humans; one gains knowledge through symbolic imagery and rhythm; one should live in harmony with nature; there is oneness between humans and nature; the survival of the group holds the utmost importance; humans should appropriately utilize the materials around them; one’s self is complementary to others’; spirituality, inner divinities and deities hold the great importance, and should be worshipped; cooperative, collective responsibility, and interdependence are the key values which all should strive to achieve; all humans are considered to be equal, share a common bond, and be a part of the group. In Wole Soyinka’s plays under examination, we find proverbs that are centered around the beliefs based on Afrocentric worldview.

To begin with, proverb (23) is “When manhood must, it ends.” (Baroka, 28) This proverb deals with the most thinking quality about men and the problematic aspects of their masculine behavior and identity. The essential message in this proverb is the lost of potency when it is still needed. In the context of the play, this proverb is used by Baroka as a lie in which he reveals his incapacity to take a woman. This is his strategy toward winning Sidi through Sadiku. Baroka knows that women will celebrate a kind of victory over him when they hear that the old polygamist man Baroka is no longer

viril. They would come and mock at him. This strategy works because after all, Sidi accepts Baroka, and she was surprised to see on bed that Baroka's impotency was a lie. He was still viril, and he takes her.

The Afrocentric worldview in this proverb is centered around the belief that, in Africa, women are actually in charge of patriarchal society. In addition, it seems now clear that in Africa, man's sexual potency is at the centre in conjugal life. This considerations are the bases of women's oppression, rape and abuse by men across Africa.

Proverb (25) is "The woman gets lost in the woods one day and every wood deity dies the next." (Baroka, 38) This proverb conveys the message on man's optimism to win any woman he really loves. In the context of the play, it is used by Baroka in his ultimate words to win Sidi's consent. Again, this proverb concludes Baroka's address to Sidi who suddenly replies that, she thinks, Baroka will win her.

The specificity of the Afrocentric worldview in this proverb lies simply in the facts that it is an Igbo proverb. It employs the image of getting lost in the woods, and there is the presence of the deity. Baroka who uses it, and Sidi he addresses it to, represent African tradition in the whole play.

The next proverb to analyze is proverb (27) "When the child is full of riddles, the mother has one water-pot the less." (Baroka, 39) This proverb indirectly conveys the message of the possibility for any man to change his old wives by another very young girl, when he has learnt to tire them.

In the action of the play, it is Baroka who uses this proverb as the answer to Sidi's question if the favourite as in some way dissatisfied with her lord and husband.

In this proverb, the Afrocentric worldview is centered around the discourse communicative strategies used by the two characters involved in the action of the play. These strategies are used either to avoid direct confrontation or even to give respect to the old man during the conversation. Among the Yoruba, especially, and in most of Africa, it is not socially and culturally appropriate to confront people directly and the "age factor" that is respect for age, always requires certain discourse strategies to avoid face threatening acts as well as to save face. In the action of the play, in order not to sound disrespectful to an older person – her village chief for the matter, Sidi resorts to an indirect strategy in which she uses terms such as 'was the *favourite*

dissatisfied with *her lord and husband?*' and Baroka in his turn uses terms such as '*the child, the mother, my daughter*' (my italics).

Proverb (28) is 'Who knows? Until the finger nails has scraped the dust, no one can tell which insect released his bowels.' (Baroka, 39) This is a philosophical, empirical truth portraying the obligation and the necessity for men to carry on all the steps leading to the achievement, accomplishment of any process, procedure, etc. so that success, win are theirs without any other condition. The action of the play in which this proverb is used is closely linked to the one we have described above. In fact, Baroka is keeping on convincing Sidi so that she accepts to marry him. As in the part of the action described above, here Sidi uses another indirectness strategy which ultimately leads Baroka to use the proverb under examination. She says: 'And is this another...changing time for the Bale?'⁵⁷² She addresses Baroka as 'the Bale,' using his title, as she cannot call him by his name, and calling him 'Mr.' will not be very appropriate either, since Baroka is a very traditional man and might consider it rather insulting to be addressed a casual 'Mr.,' a form of address used for Western-educated young people. These facts tell us that, this proverb is actually based on the Afrocentric worldview.

The forthcoming proverb is (30) 'Does the bush cow run to hole when he hears his beaters' Hei-ei-who-rah!' (Baroka, 42) This is another philosophical, empirical truth from the interrogative proverb under consideration, which unfortunately ends in an exclamation mark. It thematizes the relation between a bush cow and his beaters, with a particular attention to the bush cow's attitude, reaction when it hears his beaters' voices. Does it run to hole? The answer from the people's experience is no. The bush cow does not run to hole when he hears his beaters voices, cries. The important message in this proverb is that, a man who really falls in love with a beautiful woman, girl cannot give up and abandon before he wins her because of other men's ambition to court the same woman, girl.

Proverb (31) is 'The fox is said to be wise so cunning that he stalks and dines on new hatched chickens.' (Sidi, 42) This proverb is also an indirectness communicative strategy. The use of 'The fox' as one of Baroka's title reinforces the idea of an uncompromising win of Baroka over Lakunle. This proverb expresses a general agreement that, the fox is wise that he does miss any new and nice prey.

⁵⁷² Wole Soyinka, 'The Lion and the Jewel' in *Collected Plays 2*, op. cit., p. 39.

The next proverb is (32) "...we shall begin by cutting stamps for our own village alone." (Baroka, 47) This proverb is used in Baroka's monologue. It has the same meaning as "Charity begins at home", which Baroka has also used in his talk. He says this proverb using the personal pronoun 'we' including Sidi who unfortunately is faced from nearly the distance of the room. Through this saying, Baroka promises Sidi that their beginnings will of course be modest. Baroka and Sidi represent a very positive aspect of African tradition. To this respect, their proverbs have an Afrocentric worldview overtone.

Then proverb (33) is "I do not hate progress, only its nature which makes all roofs and faces look the same. And I wish of one old man is that here and there." (Baroka, 47) This saying is not actually a proverb like the other ones already described above. It is part of Baroka's own experience of life, his own appreciation and judgement of value on the relation between modernity and tradition. We find it important to analyze this statement in this section devoted to proverb, because it is centered around the Afrocentric worldview. In fact, Baroka who uses this statement is also the Bale or Viceroyal Chieftain of Ilujinle, a Yoruba village in the realm of the Ibadan clan's kingdom. A crafty individual, he is the Lion referred to in the title of the play. At sixty years of age, he has already sired sixty three children. The essential idea in this statement is that sameness revolts Baroka's being and nature as it is written in the next proverb (34) "Among the bridges and the murderous roads, below the humming birds which smoke the face of Sango, dispenser of the snake-tongue lightning; between moment and the reckless broom that will be wielded in these years to come, we must leave virgin plots of lives, rich decay and the tang of vapour rising from forgotten heaps of compost, lying undisturbed...But the skin of progress masks, unknown, the spotted wolf of sameness...Does sameness not revolt your being, my daughter?" Baroka,

Then, proverb (35) is "The proof of wisdom is the wish to learn even from children. And the haste of youth must learn its temper from the gloss of ancient leather, from a strength knit close along the grain. The school teacher and I, must learn one from the other. Is it not so?" (Baroka, 48-49)

This statement emphasizes one's self complementary to others, and this is essential in the Afrocentric worldview.

Proverb (36) is ‘‘Yesterday’s wine alone is strong and blooded, child, and though the Christians’ holy book denies the truth of this, old wine thrives best within a new bottle. The coarseness is mellowed down, and the rugged wine acquires a full and rounded body...Is this not so –my child?’’ (Baroka, 49) In this excerpt of the play, Baroka makes an accumulation of proverbs. We distinguish three proverbs that can be used separately. The truth is that, all these proverbs are used in the same context of the play. To this regards, they express ideas which are closed in meaning. Different types of images are used in order to express the same idea. That is to say, the relation between the old and the new. These proverbs accumulated integrate the main theme of the play. The characters involved in the action of the play leading to the use of this accumulation of proverbs are Baroka and Sidi. The time of the day is the night. They are in Baroka’s bedroom.

These accumulated proverbs take into account the situations that are part of the climax and resolution of the whole play. Sidi consents. She accepts Baroka. In this respect, all the proverbs accumulated by Baroka pave the way to the realization of the sexual act he is engaged for, to dissipate any atmosphere of hesitation, resistance, refusal, etc. during this time. We find it important to remind again that, the Afrocentric worldview in this accumulation of proverbs lies in the fact that the two characters involved are defenders of African tradition. They all accept the situation of polygamy. Sadiku who is Baroka’s elder wife works as a go-between to seek beautiful young girls for her old polygamous husband. This is part of African tradition alone.

The next proverb is (37) is ‘‘Those who know little of Baroka think his life on pleasure-living course. But the monkey sweats, my child, the monkey sweats, it is only the hair upon his back which deceives the world...’’ (Baroka, 49)

The important part in this statement is Wole Soyinka’s transposition of a Yoruba proverb into English, that is: ‘‘Obo nlagan, iran eyin re ni ko je kaye mo’’ which the author translates as ‘‘The monkey sweats, it is only the hair upon its back that still deceives the world’’, but in standard English, it signifies: ‘‘It takes time for good deeds to be recognized.’’ The important message conveyed in this proverb is that, the most glorious task of man is to be doing good things, because memories of men’s lives, their works and their deeds will continue in others.

IV-2-6- Proverbs for the Mediation of Conflict.

Wole Soyinka has dealt with the theme of conflict in many of his plays. Reading through those plays reveal that causes, consequences are mentioned, approach of solutions proposed. One of the ways Soyinka suggests to mediate conflictual situation is the use of proverbs. We consider the word mediation as a key to understand what they are all about. In *Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language* the term mediation designates the process for bringing agreement or reconciliation between opponents in dispute.⁵⁷³ Mediation is widely utilized for handling divorce, child custody cases, interpersonal disputes, management disputes, community disputes, environment disputes, and international disputes. In Wole Soyinka's plays, proverbs are used to mediate interpersonal disputes.

The first proverb we analyse is (21) 'If the snail finds splinters in his shell he changes house.' (Sidi, 7) In this proverb, the two parties do not need a third and neutral party to help them find a resolution, an agreement or a reconciliation. Here the resolution is amicably. The message which is conveyed in this proverb is to show empathy, and the capacity for the two parties to do something themselves that will gratify both of them.

Then proverb (26) 'If the tortoise cannot tumble it does not mean that he can stand.' (Sidi, 38-9) This proverb is actually about conflict. But, the conflict does not concern two parties. It is an inner conflict. This conflict is within a person; the second party who does share it, helps in mediating. His mediation consists in bring the message that strengthens psychologically. In short, this proverb tells the message that there is not a fatality in any situation; there are solutions to all situations.

The last proverb in this subsection is (29) 'They say he uses well his dogs and horses.' (Sidi, 41) In the play the conflict is between Lakunle and Baroka because they both court the beautiful young girl of the village. She is Sidi. Now, Baroka asks Sidi if Lakunle is a good and kind man. The answer is Sidi's proverb under consideration, that is 'They say he uses well his dogs and horses.' Through this proverb, Sidi at this moment mediates the interpersonal conflict between Baroka and Lakunle. The technique that works successfully in his mediation is neutrality, because

⁵⁷³ *Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language*, (London: Random House, 1994).

when she answers Baroka's question on Lakunle, she answers, "They say". She does not give her own opinion about the issue. This also prevents herself from entering in conflict with Baroka, why not with Lakunle.

IV-2-7- Proverbs on Religious Hypocrisy.

Religious hypocrisy is one of the themes *The Trials of Brother Jero* deals with. This social phenomenon can be defined as a non-belief, since it is only a pretention to be an adherent of the faith. A religious hypocrite practices sins on a routine basis. In *The Trials of Brother Jero*, the proverb which is about religious hypocrisy is (63) "There are eggs and there are eggs." (Brother Jero, 145) This statement is meaningful; even its syntactic structure reveals its meaning, that is religious leaders are all hypocrites. They are all the same.

From the analysis of proverbs that we have done above, it seems clear that Wole Soyinka has drawn on both his Yoruba culture and on European to construct an oral discourse through which he successfully conveys his messages. They are ranged as proverbs and temporality, proverbs on going conflict of values; proverbs on rejection of modern technique; proverbs on power and wealth; proverbs on Eurocentric worldview; proverbs on Afrocentric worldview; proverbs on mediation of conflict; and proverbs on religious hypocrisy. In addition, the proverbs we have analysed reveal that Wole Soyinka who put them in the mouths of his characters grew up in a social environment in which words are integrate part of culture. In those proverbs we read images and symbols, which make also some of them metaphors, fables, and riddles. Our literary sensibility makes us point this situation as an aesthetic feature in Wole Soyinka's plays under consideration.

CONCLUSION

In the concluding part of this dissertation that I have carried out within eight years, and which is the continuation of my Diplôme d' Etudes Approfondies thesis, it is worth recalling that I have kept dealing with the same theme "The Aesthetic Features of Wole Soyinka's Plays". However, in order to get more insight into the subject matter, I intend to carry the work around four main chapters. The issue is to show the aspects and values of aesthetics inherent in Wole Soyinka's plays under scrutiny.

Wole Soyinka's plays has established a successful pattern for the integration of aesthetic features such as: comedy, tragedy, tragicomedy, satire, plots, balance, opposition, language variations, citations, reference, allusions, dance, songs, music, movements, proverbs as frames. The dramatist has used them to develop and express the deepest thoughts and feelings of characters, to advance the plots, and to enhance the stories. All these aesthetic features in the plays have dramatic functions. In short, they convey the messages, themes of the plays.

Wole Soyinka's selected plays reveal his inherent theatrical qualities based on rituals, beliefs, deities, festivals and ceremonies of West Africa. Yoruba cosmology reflects a conviction in the continuity among the three states of being: the dead, the living and the supernaturals in *A Dance of the Forests*. Inhabitants engaged in continuous appeasement of the Serpent of the swamp through ritual offerings for good fortune and prosperity in *The Swamp Dwellers*. There is a mingling and contrasting of Yoruba purification rites, especially the carrier ritual in *The Strong Breed*. Ideas and conventions relating to Agemo and his festivals such as the Drivers Festivals underpin the background and structure of *The Road*. The dance of the lost travelers draws on Yoruba tradition and many other African rituals in *The Lion and the Jewel*. The New Yam festival has been appropriated by Soyinka as the setting of a political upheaval in his tragicomedy *Kongi's Harvest*.

In the first chapter which is devoted to aesthetic frames and dramatic forms, I have tried first of all, to examine the influence of European political theatre, frames and social theory on the account of understanding Wole Soyinka's plays under consideration. Secondly, I have elaborated upon politics and aesthetics. In the last section of this chapter, I have dealt with the way Wole Soyinka frames social and political issues. In the end, it becomes evident that aesthetics is synonymous with literature, the art based on imagination, the discipline which creates and re-creates meaning through observation, imagination, in one word, fiction. Aesthetic frames are

both contained materials and dramatic form containers. The situation is the same with aesthetics and politics because, at this level, Wole Soyinka frames political and social issues in his dramatic works in the same way as his Western favorites. They help him, through reading their literary works, to frame issues with the aim of claiming human rights, more human rights, democracy, good political alternance, environmental and ecological rights, etc; he denounces tyranny, violence, all forms of injustice.

Wole Soyinka's aesthetics frames the ideal of religious tolerance between Christianity and Muslim through the story of the nature of African family in *The Swamp Dwellers*. Through this framing we discover the hospitality that Alu and Makuri in their swampy village situated in the south and Christians part of the country offer to the blind Beggar who comes from the dry north and Muslim part of the country of the country. This is also part of the universality of Soyinka's plays when we know that, in some countries and continents, Catholics and Protestants, and other religions opposed in belief and ethics do not accept each other.

In addition, in chapter II which is about language and intertextuality, I have deciphered the different language and intertextuals variations in the plays. It comes to light that some of Wole Soyinka's plays under scrutiny such as *The Road*, and *The Trials of Brother Jero* are multilingual. They exploit a variety of language levels for dramatic effects. The evocation of the concept language levels is associated with American colloquial English, simplified and Nigrian Pidgin English. In addition, the plays stand also on the use of informal and formal language, and Yoruba language. Additionally, code switching and code mixing are also part of linguistic modes in the plays. Simplified English is used by the unemployed characters touts and truck drivers. The crucial problem of unemployment in the play, and for Nigerians after the country's independence justifies the state of underdevelopment of post-colonial Nigeria. The use of Pidgin English fits the exploration of the theme of corruption in a broader sense, and in particular, political and religious corruption. In addition, Wole Soyinka in his *The Road* and *The Trials of Brother Jero* uses Pidgin English to emphasize the socio-economic and political aspects of Nigerian pre-civil war life. The rich influence of indigenous African languages, the nature and characteristics of Wole Soyinka's plays, and the dramatization of language pass through the use of variations such as pidgin English, simplified English, code switching and code mixing in Wole Soyinka's plays.

Furthermore, intertextual variations include figures such as citation. The aesthetics of citations in literature is revealed in such a way, being one of the forms of intertextuality, they enrich literature by opening its doors to other domains. There are also allusions, and references. Nominal allusions, which are names of festivals, rituals and rites are implicitly used in the plays. Names of Yoruba pantheons are also used in the plays. Names of Biblical women's who work to ensure justice for themselves and the God's people, their self-respect, dignity, courage, their refusal to be silenced as they transformed from victims to powerful women who right some of the wrongs they have endured. Verbal allusions such as "AKSIDENT STORE – ALL PART AVAILEBUL", in Wole Soyinka's selected plays is used to fulfill the function of emphasis, and to denounce Professor's option and choice of using the old mammy waggon as the store specialized in the sale of things that belonged to victims of road accident he causes himself. Spare parts are also pulled out from cars after accidents, and stocked in his store for sale.

Soyinka uses mythological allusions to serve the quest for moral regeneration and reinforcement. He uses Yoruba mythology to awaken black consciousness regarding their changing society under Western culture's influence and to help Africans revalidate their cultural values. In plain words, Soyinka resorts to Yoruba mythological allusions as an examination and affirmation of African cultural values, and a resistance to European indoctrination of African society. Biblical allusions are also used by Wole Soyinka in his selected plays. Demoke's murder of Oremole is a notable example of biblical allusion of Cain and Abel. This story is also about murder, caused by jealousy. The literary ideas conveyed in both stories are summarized in the danger of harboring hatred, and violence. Though, it is inevitable for brethren to get crossed with one another. The wise way to deal with such problems and situations is to go and tell the brother his fault between oneself and him alone. Historical allusions refer to the terms "Mali. Chaka- Songhai – Glory- Empires", "Mali - Songhai. Lisabi - Chaka", they are used in *A Dance of the Forests* as an historical allusion to the glory of the African past on the "Independence Day". Characters in *A Dance of the Forests* should not reduce the history of their country to positive events, happenings, etc. alone. The telling and the writing of the country's history must take into account all the events, be them positive or/and negative. Wole Soyinka's allusion to this historical reality fulfils the function of clearly pushing for an understanding of the histories that

are less illustrious. The fact of acknowledging only the histories that are glorious but falling to realize the stories that are less honorable even shameful, the society is harming itself by repeating the past mistakes. In addition, 'Nazi salut' and 'Field Marshal' from Wole Soyinka's *Kongi's Harvest* are historical allusion to dictatorship regime in Africa with the possibility to point the universality of these issues because dictatorship is not a specificity of Africa, but there are abuses of power in other continents. In *The Lion and the Jewel* and through their uses of references to *The Bible*, both Baroka and Sidi act successfully for the victory of tradition over modernity.

Furthermore, in the third chapter which devoted to theatricality, shifting dramatic forms, I have read the plays under scrutiny through theatrical plots and theatrical structures, dramatic structures, balance and duality. I have also dealt with dramatic effects. As far as plots and theatrical structures are concerned, I have tried to decipher the different categories of plots: plots of destiny, plots of characters, plots of thought and flashbacks, through which Wole Soyinka has depicted the life of his people. Reading through dramatic structures reveals that balance, duality, symmetry, dissymmetry, antissymmetry, inverted symmetry, near symmetry and opposition are the major dramatic structural elements in Wole Soyinka's plays under analysis. They are manifested at the levels of characters, composition and text structure, important objects and ideas, etc. Reading through the plays, it comes to light that some of the works such as *Kongi's Harvest* opens when the first actions of the story have already taken place. In addition, anonymat is used at the level of characterization with characters names: Professor, a Girl, Old Man, Physician, Councillor, Historian, a Beggar, Village Girls, a Wrestler, a Surveryor, Trader (s), Secretary, Member of Parliament, Old Prophet. It fulfils the function of representing the whole community of people who act the way they do. The principle of unity is fulfilled when a man and a woman are together for the same cause; patriarchy and domination are against this principle.

Dramatic effects give that feeling of drama, suspense, and mystery; the mood/feeling/atmosphere of excitement. The symbols and signs that tell theatre in drama may be listed as follows: physical actions including movements, gestures and facial expressions, and sound effects, music and dance. Wole Soyinka's writings are at once deeply rooted in traditional African expressive and performance forms like myths and rituals, dance and mime, music and masquerade. In Wole Soyinka's 'dance of exorcism', 'dance of welcome', 'dance of Half-Child', 'dance of the unwilling

sacrifice' and 'dance around the totem' used in *A Dance of the Forests*; 'dance of the lost traveller', 'communal or festive dances', 'individual dances', 'the mime of the white surveyor', and 'dance of triumph' in *The Lion and the Jewel*; 'royal dance' in *Kongi's Harvest* are performed to express ideas and feelings. Songs are also parts of oral traditional devices used as narrative techniques. They are accompanied by drums, flutes, African guitar, etc. which are very symbolic in African negro aesthetics. Songs make Soyinka's plays very interesting, and they express ideas and thoughts through the themes they deal with. In Soyinka's plays songs encompass moral teaching for the natives in their daily socio-political activities. Songs as narrative techniques include the following types or categories: song of welcome in *A Dance of the Forests*; 'songs of regret and anger', 'song of protest', 'bridal songs', 'song for celebrating marriage' in *The Lion and the Jewel*; 'praise-songs' in *The Lion and the Jewel*, *Kongi's Harvest*, and *The Road*; songs of political conflict in *Kongi's Harvest*; 'songs of the passage of life to death' and 'war-chants' in *The Road*. All these songs are ritual. These songs also show that Wole Soyinka successfully does the mixture of genres. He mixes drama to other literary genres, such as poetry. Figures of speech are also used in the songs. The most used are repetitions, similes and metaphors.

In the fourth chapter which is devoted to theatricality, proverbs and performance, I have tried to analyse numerically and one by one all the proverbs selected, presented and categorized in order to reveal their aesthetic value that is they indirectly convey messages in relation with the themes of the plays. Proverbs in the plays deal with the following themes: past, present and future, on-going conflict of values, rejection of modern technique, power and wealth, Eurocentric worldview, Afrocentric worldview, mediation of conflict, and religious hypocrisy.

It results from this analysis that another country cannot be held responsible for the ills in one's own country. It is the duty of the citizens to rid their country of any evil. To this effect, if the people were not alert and vigil, history would repeat itself and they would repeat their mistakes, which would eventually prove detrimental to the evolution and progress of their country.

Wole Soyinka interrogates the idealized image of Africa and takes us to witness the error of political tyranny by an ancient African emperor, and the bestiality of human nature. In addition, it is too far back in the past, or else there is some deep reluctance to look at slave trade referred in contemporary Nigerian literature: Wole

Soyinka. He deals here with the guilt of the old African Empires which sold their own people as slaves.

Wole Soyinka frames issues of gender through nominal and biblical allusions. In fact, names that refer implicitly to the religious system and domain: ‘‘My Ruth, my Rachel, Esther, Bathsheba thou sum of fabled perfections from Genesis to the Revelations’’ (p.19) in *The Lion and the Jewel* are biblical women who respectively: demonstrate how a woman, seen as vulnerable and powerless can work with others together to ensure justice for themselves and for God’s people, demonstrate again and again that God deeply loves these woman who manages to create power for herself, her family, and future even in a society that gives her that little power, exhibit self-respect and courage, and constitute a call to action of us to stand up for equality for woman and all humanity, and refuse to be silenced as they transformed from victims to powerful women who right some of the wrongs they have endured. In addition, Wole Soyinka, through the story of Eman in *The Strong Breed*, especially the stories of the prodigal son, and patriarchy take also into account the notions of continuity, humility, submission, love, equality, mutuality, in the father-mother-children relationship. Women are created with these godly characteristics just as much as men. And sexual differences were created and designed for reproduction, but not for governance.

In the plays it is revealed that equality of sex and gender leads to the integral development of the humankind. The story of the ‘dance of love, unity and coalition for confrontation’ performed by Daodu and Segi in the first part of *Kongi’s Harvest* is illustrative. Reading through Daodu and Segi’s dance reveals that this performance which seeks the consolidation of love, unity and coalition between the two lovers is the condition for them opposing to Kongi, and confronting him successfully.

The issue of corruption is framed in Wole Soyinka’s plays as being social, political and religious. This fact has a universal dimension. In addition, cultural authenticity involves recovering tradition and inserting it in postcolonial modernity by the use rituals, rites, ceremonies, festivals in his plays. This facilitate transformative moral and political justice.

At last, we may also have the result which follows: people who have received a very high education, for instance the professor uses his literacy for wrongdoings such as forging documents (driving licences), removing traffic signs because of his own

ambition of stocking his store from the abundant sacrifice of wrecks and road victims. He also sees the accident as a sacrifice to a thirsty river goddess.

However, the analysis of these chapters could not be achieved with a single approach. That is why I have used many approaches for its completion. I finally hope that throughout this analysis I have tried to show that Nigeria's newly installed leaders have learnt very much bad lessons from colonialism, that is, to abuse of their power. I have also found mismanagement with ordinary people having some power, and the issue of sacrifice according to destiny.

As plays are written to be performed. Moreover, theatrical performance deserves Wole Soyinka's dramatic texts under consideration. Wole Soyinka's aesthetic features can only be properly understood when they are acted to in the theatre. The performance on stage reveals the fullness and significance of drama.

While writing this dissertation, the major problem I have been faced with was documentation. I have not been able to get all the books written by Wole Soyinka, let alone the critical studies concerning them. I hope to have more opportunities in the coming years so as to be better equipped for further scientific works in the field of literature.

In the end, the term aesthetics applied to Wole Soyinka's plays remains ambiguous. Through this application, it comes to light that aesthetics may be synonymous with literature, frame, and fiction. In this respect, it deals with all aspects of life that literature mirrors. The conclusion of this study leaves us with the need for further research. We want to know more about literary intertextual variations in Wole Soyinka's plays under scrutiny and other African writers' works, Wole Soyinka's plays and European writers' such as William Shakespeare, Bertold Brecht, Samuel Beckett, Georges Bernard Shaw, Patrick Modiano, etc.; autobiographical study of Wole Soyinka's plays; reading some of Wole Soyinka's works as history plays; mixture of genres in Wole Soyinka's plays: drama, poetry, tale, etc.; irony, metaphors, symbols, other proverbs and performance; Wole Soyinka's plays and other arts such as sculpture, photography, topography, journalism, arithmetics, etc.; truth, justice and power, women and children conditions in Wole Soyinka's plays.

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ANNEXES

PLAN OF ANNEXES

Annex 1: Glossary of words and expressions in Nigerian Pidgin English

The Road, p. 230

Abi: do you mean to say?; or

Am: him; her; it

Chop: eat; enjoy

Dey: which; who

Fit: is able to

Haba: ha!

Kuku: used for emphasis like self

Na: it's

Na so: just so

Picken; child; children

Wes, wis: what?; what kind of?; which?; what's the?

Wetin: what

Wey: which; who

Na palm oil: It is palm oil

You dey like monkey wey stoway inside sailor suit': You like a monkey stowed inside a sailor suit

Wes: what's

Na me: didn't I

Na wetin: or what

Wey no: with no

Go siddon: sit down

You no chop this morning?': You didn't breakfast this morning?

Me sah: Me sir

My very self sah: Am I that really sir

You no: you don't

Say'e no: says he doesn't

Worry am as if you na in wife: worry him as if you were his wife

You dey: don't you

Dat kind person: that kind of person

He dey: does he

Dat ting every morning self: that thing every morning alone

Why' e no kuku play the ting inside?: (Why does he play himself?)

Dat one no to church, na high society: That is not church, that's high society

You no sabe de ting wey man dey call class so shurup your mout Professor Enh: You know nothing about those things which men call class so shut up Professor enh

If na you be bishop and somebody dey do dat kin' ting you no vex?: If you were a bishop and somebody would do something like that wouldn't you be vexed?

You tink I fear all dat in nonsense?: Do you think that I am afraid of all this nonsense?

Me a dey go find work. De whole morning done vanished for your cinema show: As for me I'm going to search for work. The whole morning has been wasted for your cinema show

If I find lorry wey want experienced tout I go come call you: If I find a lorry where they want an experienced tout I will call you

Where you dey run go self? Siddon here make we talk: Where are you running? Sit down and let's talk

Siddon here dey make cinema: Sit down, here comes the cinema

You no dey sleep for house?: shouldn't you be sleeping at home?

Adi dis one craze. Wis kin sleep for this time?: Maybe he's crazy. Who sleeps at this hour?

'E no well 'e no well, na dat one we go chop? Call am make e commot onetime:

He's not fine he's not fine, are we going to eat him? Tell him to come out right now

'Lef your: Leave your

Lef am: I say leave

I sorry I no know say na your picken Make you all walka: I'm sorry, I didn't know that these are your children Let's all of you walk

If una wan look make: If you have a wish to take a look

Wetin you stop dey look now?: why do you stop and look around?

Useless una get rubbish you dey satisfy: they are not satisfied until they have something to stare at

You dey carry your picken look that kind thing?: why are you carrying your children like that?

You tink na cowboy cinema?: Do you think that this is a cowboy movie?

Na de kind tink person dey show small pickin?: those who show this to their children?

If e: If they

You go rush go native doctor: you better take them to a medicine man

Na another man calamity you fit take look cinema: And to watch another man's calamity you can go to the cinema as well

You think say I get petrol for waste?: Do you think that I have petrol to waste?

Take your foot commot for ancelerator!: Take your foot off the accelerator!

Small small! I say small small-you tink say dis one na football game: Slowly! I said slowly-one could think it is football game.

You dey press brake: You're pressing the brakes

I say do am soft!: I say press it very softly!

You wey no fit walka na fly you wan' fly?: You are not able to walk and you want to fly?

I turn-turn this picken with one hand. Na picken 'e be Na small pickin: I really turned those little ones with one hand. And little ones they where Small little ones.

You wan' try?: Would you like to try?

You tink say na every Tom Dick and Harry fit drive tanker?: You think that every Tom Dick and Harry could drive a tanker? *me na veteran driver:* I am a veteran driver

They wan' give me: They wanted to give me *dey begin ask how den go give black man dat kind honour?:* someone begun to ask how they would give a black man that kind of honor?

Dey for give me dat one: Give it to him

The governor for home hear wetin dey wan' do: the governor has found out

'E cable back say if den give me dat kind superior medal: he cabled back saying that if they are going to give me that kind of superior medal

I go return my country begin do political agitation: I will return to my country and begin political agitation

Justice no dey for white man world: There is no justice in the white man's world

'Den beat me so tey my backside dey like dat Zeppelin balloon: They have beaten me so that until my back became like a Zeppelin balloon

If you put pin for am 'e go burs': If you pinned it, it would burst

Na dey go fight: Would they fight

Na for: is for

Na so we dey: And so we

Wey fine reach so na only bus wey fine like we own fit carry am: whose beauty reached so high that only a bus fine like the one we own fits her

We na: We are

Na you dey carry all dis load: why are you carrying all that load

We done ready for go now: we are ready to go now

Na you be de las' for enter: and you are the last to enter

If you wan' pee we stop: If you want to pee we will stop

No policeman go delay us for road: no policeman will delay us

Na you dey look so-so thin like sugar-cane so: you look as thin as a sugar-cane

If you see moto accident make you tell me: if you see a car accident tell me.

We sabbee good business: We know how to make a good business

Sell spare part and second-hand clothes: Selling spare parts and second-hand clothes

Me wey I done see dead body to tey I no fit chop meat unless den cook am to nonsense: Me who have seen so many dead corpses that I am not able to eat meat unless it is completely overcooked

I go run go there before those useless men steal all the spare part finish: I will run there before those useless men steal all the spare parts (*The Road* Pp. 152-218)

Why 'e do am?: what have I done to him?

'E no let me: he didn't let me

No like am: didn't like it

'E say 'in sleep for beach whether 'e rain or cold but that one too na big lie: He told us to sleep on the beach no matter if it rains or if it's cold but was a big lie too

Why 'en no let me get peace for mine?: why shouldn't he let me live peacefully?

How they come meet ? What time 'e know say na my wife? Why 'e dey protect am from me?: how did they meet? When did he learn this about my wife? Why is he protecting her?

Na my woman dey give am chop: my woman gives him food

'In husband no beat am: her husband didn't beat her

'In go see that 'in husband no beat am: he will watch that her husband didn't beat her

If na so: If it's so

My life done spoil: my life is destroyed

O God a no' get eyes for my head Na lie: I can't see anything

Na big lie: It's a lie

She no' go collect nutin: She won't get anything

The Prophet na 'in lover: Prophet must be her lover

Wetin a do for you wey you go spoil my life so?: what I have done so that you destroy my life completely?

Na today a go finish you!: Today I kill you (*The Trials of Brother Jero*, Pp. 169-170)

I take uniform impress all future employer: I will impress all future employers with that uniform

I know I not get job, but I get uniform: I know I don't have any job, but I have the uniform

Why you no mind your own business for heaven's sake: Why don't you mind your own business for heaven's sake?

He get experience pass me?: Is he more experienced than me?

The man too clever: This man is too clever

Which kind police?: Which kind of police? (*The Road*, Pp. 152-154)

Annex 2: Glossary of words and expressions in Yoruba language

Mariwo: palm fronds p. 44

Ampe: a children's foot-slipping game p. 69

Ibeji: twin or twin figurine p. 75

Atilogwu: a vigorous dance of the Ibos. Atilogwu means literally 'pitting in the medecine'. p. 76 (*A Dance of the Forests*)

Danski: a brief Yoruba attire, p.133 (*The Strong Breed*)

E sa mi: sing my praise. p. 155

Abi when den born am dem tie steering wheel for in neck?: was he born with a steering wheel tied to his neck? p. 161

Politics no get dramatic pass am: Politics are not half as dramatic. P. 164

Ogiri mouth: skunk mouth, p. 165

Igi dongboro lehin were: nothing like a sound club on the back of a looney, p.171.

Yio ba baba e: may it land on your father, p. 171.

Gbegi ma gbe'yawo!: wedded, not to a wife but to timber, p. 171.

Yio ba 'ponri iyi a'laiya e: may it hit the fountainhead of your great grandmother, p. 171.

Olomokuiya: Ah, what sufferings for such as give birth, p.171.

Ole ngboro fear no foe rob on own grandmamma: robber abroad, fearless one, will rob his own grandmother, p. 185.

Iwin ogodo: Imp of the swamp, p. 185.

Comforti yi, enia mi ni: my people, p. 197.

E fun awon enia wonyi...ni oti: soak these people in wine, p. 225.

Oga abi: Mister, p. 225.

Ah o ma se o: how sad, p. 225.

Onijibiti: bloody crook, p. 225. (*The Road*)

N'ijo itoro, Amuda el 'ebe l' aiya, Gbe je on'ipa': N'ijo submitted, Amuda el 'petition' hearts, eat on'ipa', p. 23.

Yokolu Yokolu. Ko ba tan bi/ Iyawo gb'oko san'le/ Oko yo 'ke...:Yokolu, Yokolu, what say you now? The wife knocked down the husband/ And he now sprouts a hunchback...,p. 40. (*The Lion and the Jewel*)

Ewo: Taboo, p. 65.

L' ogolontoro: start naked, p. 66.

Oshugbo: shrine of Oro (cult of the dead), p. 67.

Popoki: thick coarse, woven cloth, p. 67.

Obatala: a Yoruba deity, p.68.

Opele: vehicle for Ifa (divination), p. 68.

Agbadu: black, glistening snake, p. 88 (*Kongi's Harvest*)

Annex 3: Glossary of words and expressions in American colloquial English

A swell dame is gonna die: a beautiful woman is going to die

A man has gotta his pride: a man has got his pride

Ain't: am not, *am not*, *is not*, *are not*, *has not*, and *have not*, *do not*, *does not*, and *did not*, *to be not*, *to have not*, and *to do not*,

Any kind of guy: any kind of person, people
 They pee: they uninate
 Their chirren mess: their children make dirty
 All kinda refuse: all kind of refuse
 You ain't gorra: you are not going
 A guy is gorra have his principle: a person has to have his own principle
 You wanna be: you want to be
 It ain't gonna be: it is not going to be
 Some kinda: some kind of
 It's gotta be: it has got to be
 It's Gorra have: it is going to have
 what kinda insects gonna attack it
 I'll tell you whar kinda spirit is gonna be: I'll tell you what kind of spirit is going to be
 You ain't gorra: you aren't going
I don give a damn for that crazy guy: I do not give a curse to that crazy person
He's gonna go too far: it has gone too far
 We' r gerring: we're getting
 Heh: Heh
 Wairamminute: wait a minute yeah sure...to finrout: yes, sure...to find out
 we'r gerring out: we' re getting out (*The Road*, pp. 168-173)

Annex 4: Presentation of proverbs

Proverbs from *A Dance of the Forests*

- 1-Proverb to bones and silence (Agboreko, 14, 32, 33, 35, 38), Oracle to living and silence (Agboreko, 36, 37)
- 2-If you see the banana leaf freshly fibrous like a woman's breasts if you see the banana leaf Shred itself, thread on thread Hang wet as the crepe of grief don't say it's the wind. Leave the dead some room to dance. (Dirge-Man, 36)
- 3-No sensible man can burn the house to cook a little yam. (Old Man, 29)
- 4-If the flea had a house of his own, he wouldn't be out on a dog's back. (Agboreko, 32)

5-The lips of the dead did not open thus far. (Agboreko, 33)

6-The chameleon dances, his father claps and you exclaim, 'how modesty the young one keeps silence. (Agboreko, 33)

7-Because it rained the day the egg was hatched the foolish chicken swore he was a fish. (Agboreko, 33)

8-Until the last gourd has been broken, let us not talk of drought. (Agboreko, 35)

9-If the wind get lost in the rainstorm, it is useless to send him an umbrella. (Agboreko, 35)

10-The eyes that look downwards will certainly see the nose. The hand that dips to the bottom of the pot will eat the biggest snail. The sky grows no grass but if the earth called her barren, it will drink no more milk. The foot of the snake is not split in two like a man's or in hundreds like the centipedes, but if Agere could dance patiently like the snake, he will uncoil the chain that leads into the dead... (Agboreko, 36)

11-The loft is not out of reach when the dust means to settle. (Agboreko, 36)

Proverbs from *The Swamp Dwellers*

12-The blind man does not hurry for fear he out-walks his guide. (Makuri, 90)

13-When the sickness is over, the darkness begins (Beggar, 90)

14-Every god shakes a beggar by the hand (Makuri, 91)

15-The hands of the gods are unequal, (Makuri, 100)

16-All woman are a bloody-thirsty lot (Makuri, 105)

17-The swallows find their nest again when the cold is over (Beggar, 112).

Proverbs From *The Lion and The Jewel*

18-Charity begins at home. (Lakunle, 6, & Baroka, 47)

19-A prophet has honor excerpt in his own home. (Lakunle, 6)

20-Shame belongs only to the ignorant. (Lankule, 7)

21-If the snail finds splinters in his shell he changes house. (Sidi, 7)

22-A man shall take the woman and the two shall be together as one flesh. (Lakunle, 9)

23-When manhood must, it ends. (Baroka, 28)

24-Mind your own business. (Lakunle, 33)

25-The woman gets lost in the woods one day and every wood deity dies the next. (Baroka, 38)

26-If the tortoise cannot tumble it does not mean that he can stand. (Sidi, 38-9)

27-When the child is full of riddles, the mother has one water-pot the less. (Baroka, 39)

28-Who knows? Until the finger nails has scraped the dust, no one can tell which insect released his bowels. (Baroka, 39)

29-They say he uses well his dogs and horses. (Sidi, 41)

30-Does the bush cow run to hole when he hears his beaters' Hei-ei-who-rah! (Baroka, 42)

31-The fox is said to be wise so cunning that he stalks and dines on new hatched chickens. (Sidi, 42)

32-...we shall begin by cutting stamps for our own village alone. (Baroka, 47)

33-I do not hate progress, only its nature which makes all roofs and faces look the same. And I wish of one old man is that here and there. Baroka, 47)

34-Among the bridges and the murderous roads, below the humming birds which smoke the face of Sango, dispenser of the snake-tongue lightning; between moment and the reckless broom that will be wielded in these years to come, we must leave virgin plots of lives, rich decay and the tang of vapour rising from forgotten heaps of compost, lying undisturbed...But the skin of progress masks, unknown, the spotted wolf of sameness...Does sameness not revolt your being, my daughter? Baroka, 47)

35-The proof of wisdom is the wish to learn even from children. And the haste of youth must learn its temper from the gloss of ancient leather, from a strength knit close along the grain. The school teacher and I, must learn one from the other. Is it not so? Baroka, 48-49)

36-Yesterday's wine alone is strong and blooded, child, and though the Christians' holy book denies the truth of this, old wine thrives best within a new bottle. The coarseness is mellowed down, and the rugged wine acquires a full and rounded body...Is this not so –my child? (Baroka, 49)

37-Those who know little of Baroka think his life on pleasure-living course. But the monkey sweats, my child, the monkey sweats, it is only the hair upon his back which deceives the world... (Baroka, 49)

Proverbs-riddled from *Kongi's Harvest*

- 38-...an elder is an elder, and a king does not become a menial just because he puts down his crown to eat. (Superintendent, 62)
- 39-A shilling's vegetable must appease a halfpenny spice, (Danlola, 62)
- 40-The king is god. (Sarumi, 62)
- 41-What is a king without a clan of elders? (Danlola, 63)
- 42-The nude shanks of a king is not a sight for children-it will blind them. Danlola, 64)
- 43-Wise hands turn away until he's wiped his bottom, (Danlola, 64)
- 44-A crown is a burden when the king visits his favourite's chambers. When the king's wrapper falls off in audience, wise men know he wants to be left alone, (Danlola, 65)
- 45-Only a foolish child lets a father prostrate to him, (Superintendent, 65)
- 46-If the baobab shakes her head in anger, what chance has the rodent when an ear-ring falls, (Sarumi, 66)
- 47-A father employs only a small stick on his child, he doesn't call in the policeman to take him to goal, (Sarumi, 66)
- 48-Don't pound the king's yam with a small pestle, (Sarumi, 68)
- 59-The king's umbrella gives no more shade. (Drummer, 68)
- 50-The wayward child admits his errors and begs his father's forgiveness. (Fourth, 77)
- 51-...if you have money you can live like a king. (Fifth, 82)
- 52-If a detainee pays your price you'll see to his comfort. (Fifth, 82)
- 53-...all harvest must await its season, (Daodu, 98)
- 54-The ostrich also spots plumes but I've yet to see that wise bird leave the gourd, (Danlola, 101)
- 55-When a dog hides a bone does he not throw up sand? (Danlola, 101)
- 56-The tortoise and the shell is full of air pockets. (Danlola, 107)
- 57-Wise birdlings learn to separate the pigeon's cooing from the shrill alarm. (Danlola, 109)
- 58-The boldest hunter knows when the gun must be unspiked. When a squirrel seeks sanctuary up the iroko tree hunter's chase is ended... (Sarumi, 109)
- 59-...a human life once buried cannot, like (...) yam, sprout anew, (Daodu, 128)
- 60-A good soldier awaits starter's orders, (Secretary, 133)

61-When a man cannot even call briefly home to say good-bye to his native land, then hope remains his last luxury, (Secretary, 134)

62-If you are headed in that direction, then that way leads to the border, (Danlola, 135)

Proverbs From *The Trials of Brother Jero*

63-“ There are eggs”, he says “ and there are eggs”, at the opening of the play. By Brother Jero.

-“ Same thing with prophets,”

Annex 5: Patterns of proverbs

1- Similar Parallel

Different from the preceding form of proverb, in the similar parallel the statement or instruction is given twice in similar ways. The same idea is restated in different words. Sometimes, the second line makes the point more strongly than the first line did. The proverbs below are illustrations of parallel similar:

7-Until the last gourd has been broken, let us not talk of drought. (Agboreko, 35).

10-The loft is not out of reach when the dust means to settle. (Agboreko, 36).

12-The blind man does not hurry for fear he out-walks his guide. (Makuri, 90).

13-When the sickness is over, the darkness begins (Beggar, 90)

17-The swallows find their nest again when the cold is over (Beggar, 112).

28-Who knows? Until the finger nails has scraped the dust, no one can tell which insect released his bowels. (Baroka, 39).

33-I do not hate progress, only its nature which makes all roofs and faces look the same. And I wish of one old man is that here and there. (Baroka, 47).

35-The proof of wisdom is the wish to learn even from children. And the haste of youth must learn its temper from the gloss of ancient leather, from a strength knit close along the grain. The school teacher and I, must learn one from the other. Is it not so? (Baroka, 48-49).

36-Yesterday’s wine alone is strong and blooded, child, And though the Christians’ holy book denies the truth of this, old wine thrives best within a new bottle. The

coarseness is mellowed down, and the rugged wine acquires a full and rounded body...Is this not so –my child? (Baroka, 49).

55-The ostrich also spots plumes but I've yet to see that wise bird leave the gourd, (Danlola, 48).

59-The boldest hunter knows when the gun must be unspiked. When a squirrel seeks sanctuary up the iroko tree hunter's chase is ended... (Sarumi, 109).

2- Single statement

Some proverbs are single statement describing some truth. These are often short, bold statements or simple warnings. Excerpts from the plays under investigation are the following:

1-Proverbs to bones and silence; Oracle to living and silence

3-No sensible man can burn the house to cook a little yam. (Old Man, 29).

5-The lips of the dead did not open thus far. (Agboreko, 33).

6-The chameleon dances, his father claps and you exclaim, 'how modesty the young one keeps silence. (Agboreko, 33).

7-Because it rained the day the egg was hatched the foolish chicken swore he was a fish. (Agboreko, 33).

8-Until the last gourd has been broken, let us not talk of drought. (Agboreko, 35).

11-The loft is not out of reach when the dust means to settle. (Agboreko, 36)

14-Every god shakes a beggar by the hand (Makuri, 91).

15-The hands of the gods are unequal (Makuri, 100).

16-All woman are a bloody-thirsty lot (Makuri, 105)

18-Charity begins at home. (Lakunle, 5).

19-A prophet has honor excerpt in his own home (Lakunle, 6).

20-Shame belongs only to the ignorant. (Lankule, 6).

22-A man shall take the woman and the two shall be together as one flesh (Lakunle, 9).

23-When manhood must, it ends (Baroka, 28).

24-Mind your own business. (Baroka, 33).

25-The woman gets lost in the woods one day and every wood deity dies the next (Baroka, 38).

29-They say he uses well his dogs and horses. (Sidi, 41).

- 30-Does the bush cow run to hole when he hears his beaters' Hei-ei-who-rah! (Baroka,)
- 31-The fox is said to be wise so cunning that he stalks and dines on new hatched chickens. (Sidi, 42).
- 32-...we shall begin by cutting stamps for our own village alone (Baroka, 47).
- 56-When a dog hides a bone does he not throw up sand? (Danlola, 48).
- 38-...an elder is an elder, and a king does not become a menial just because he puts down his crown to eat. (Superintendent, 62).
- 39-A shilling's vegetable must appease a halfpenny spice, (Danlola, 62).
- 40-The king is good. (Sarumi, 62).
- 41-What is a king without a clan of elders? (Danlola, 63).
- 43-The nude shanks of a king is not a sight for children-it will blind them. (Danlola, 64).
- 44-Wise hands turn away until he's wiped his bottom, (Danlola, 64).
- 46-Only a foolish child lets a father prostrate to him, (Superintendent, 65).
- 48-A father employs only a small stick on his child, he doesn't call in the policeman to take him to goal, (Sarumi, 66).
- 49-Don't pound the king's yam with a small pestle, (Sarumi, 68).
- 50-The king's umbrella gives no more shade. (Drummer, 68).
- 57-The tortoise and the shell is full of air pockets. (Danlola, 107).
- 58-Wise birdlings learn to separate the pigeon's cooing from the shrill alarm. (Danlola, 109).
- 60-A good soldier awaits starter's orders, (Secretary, 133).

3- Statement with an explanation

In this form of proverbs, the first line is a concrete image which is then explained by the second line:

10-The eyes that look downwards will certainly see the nose. The hand that dips to the bottom of the pot will eat the biggest snail. The sky grows no grass but if the earth called her barren, it will drink no more milk. The foot of the snake is not split in two like a man's or in hundreds like the centipede's, but if Agere could dance patiently like the snake, he will uncoil the chain that leads into the dead... (Agboreko, 36).

4-If the flea had a house of his own, he wouldn't be out on a dog's back. (Agboreko, 32).

37-Those who know little of Baroka think his life on pleasure-living course. But the monkey sweats, my child, the monkey sweats, it is only the hair upon his back which deceives the world... (Baroka, 49).

49-A crown is a burden when the king visits his favourite's chambers. When the king's wrapper falls off in audience, wise men know he wants to be left alone, (Danlola, 65).

54-...all harvest must await its season, (Daodu, 98).

4- Comparison

The particularity of this form of proverbs is they use striking images that compare one thing or person to another. These are called 'metaphors'. Instances of illustration are:

34-Among the bridges and the murderous roads, below the humming birds which smoke the face of Sango, dispenser of the snake-tongue lightning; between moment and the reckless broom that will be wielded in these years to come, we must leave virgin plots of lives, rich decay and the tang of vapour rising from forgotten heaps of compost, lying undisturbed...But the skin of progress masks, unknown, the spotted wolf of sameness...Does sameness not revolt your being, my daughter? (Baroka, 47).

42-Only a phony drapes himself in deeper indigo than the son of the deceased, (Danlola, 64).

63-There are eggs and there are eggs (Brother Jero, 145).

5- 'If ...then' statement and 'or...else' instruction

These proverbs are structured in such way as the second part explains the consequences of doing or not doing something. The 'or...else' is usually implied but not stated:

2-If you see the banana leaf freshly fibrous like a woman's breasts if you see the banana leaf Shred itself, thread on thread Hang wet as the crepe of grief don't say it's the wind. Leave the dead some room to dance. (Dirge-Man, 36)

4-If the flea had a house of his own, he wouldn't be out on a dog's back. (Agboreko, 32).

9-If the wind get lost in the rainstorm, it is useless to send him an umbrella. (Agboreko, 35).

- 21-If the snail finds splinters in his shell he changes house. (Sidi, 7).
- 26-If the tortoise cannot tumble it does not mean that he can stand. (Sidi, 38-39).
- 27-When the child is full of riddles, the mother has one water-pot the less. (Baroka, 39).
- 47-If the baobab shakes her head in anger, what chance has the rodent when an ear-ring falls, (Sarumi, 66).
- 51-The wayward child admits his errors and begs his father's forgiveness. (Fourth, 77).
- 52-...if you have money you can live like a king. (Fifth, 82).
- 53-If a detainee pays your price you'll see to his comfort. (Fifth, 82).
- 61-When a man cannot even call briefly home to say good-bye to his native land, then hope remains his last luxury, (Secretary, 134).
- 62-If you are headed in that direction, then that way leads to the border, (Danlola, 135).

Annex 6: Other proverbs

A Dance of the Forests

- the knife doesn't carve its own handle, 10
- if the hunter loses his quarry, he looks up to see where the vultures are circling, 14
- where my hands are burning to work, where my hands are trembling to mould, my body will not take me, 20
- the squirrel who dances on a broken branch, must watch whose jaws are open down below, 27
- you cannot get rid of ancestors with the little toys of children, 38
- if the child needs a fright, then the mother must summon the witch, 46
- it is not given to eye to perceive its own beauty, reflection is nothing, except in the eye of a sensitive soul, 46
- a man cannot take a wife without a dowry, 49
- a soldier does not choose his wars, 49
- it is in the nature of men to seek power over the lives of others, 54
- it is the privilege of beauty to be capricious, 55
- when the crops have been gathered it will be time enough for the winnowing of the grain, 72

The Swamp Dwellers

- dead men don't go to the city. They go to hell, 82
- ‘where the rivers meet, there the marriage must begin. And the river bed itself is the perfect bridal bed’, 86
- the cocoa-pods must be bursting with fullness, 104

The Strong Breed

- those two have must do give fulfil themselves only in total loneliness, 125
- if you want the new year to cushion the land there be no deeds of anger, 129
- a village which cannot produce its own carrier contains no men, 129
- it is too much to ask a man to give up his own soil, 129
- it is a poor beginning for a year when our own curses remain hovering over our homes because the carrier refused to take them, 132
- a man should be at his strongest, 133
- a man must go on his own, go where no one can help him and test his strength, 38-9

The Road

- a man must protect himself against the indifference of comrades who desert him, 167
- the butterfly thinks the flapping of his wings fathered the whirlwind that Followed, 182
- When a man has one leg in each world, his legs are never the same, 187
- a man shall be alert in each event, 195
- sensible men turn from what they may not see, 196
- A driver must have sensitive soles on his feet, 202
- the dust in the belfry never quite settles. It only awaits the next clangour, 207
- When a man retires he must be able to retire somewhere, 212
- Much more peaceful to trade in death than to witness it, 219
- It is a painful thing to desert one's calling, 226

The Lion and the Jewel

- a man must prepare to fight alone, 7

-Romance is the sweetening of the soul with fragrance offered by the stricken heart, 10

-Does the bush cow run to hole when he hears beater's Hei-ei-wo-rah!, 42

-A man must have time to prepare, to learn to like the thought, 56

Kongi's Harvest

-The pot that will eat fat its bottom must be scorched, 61

-The squirrel that will long crack nuts its foot pad must be score, 61

-The sweetest wine has flowed down the tappers' shattered shins and there is more, 61

-Wise hands turn away until he's wiped his bottom, 64

-It is a mindless clown who dispenses thanks as a fowl scatters meal not carrying where it falls, 64

-Only a foolish child lets a father prostrate to him, 65

-The dead will witness we drew the poison from the root, 66

-When the patriarch overturns his pipe make away, 71

-The politician fights for place with fat juices on the tongue of generations, 75

-A child is still a child, 68

-Wise partymen must learn the cunning to crab and feint, to regroup and then disband like hornets, 119

-If the young sapling bends, the old twig if it resists the wind, can only break, 123

-It's a foolish Elder who becomes a creditor, since he must wait until the other world, or outlive his debtors, 123

-It seems suddenly futile, putting one's head into lion's jaws, 126

-A king's beard is an awesome net, 140

-Whatever fly cuts a careless caper around the scent of sacrifice will worship down the spider's throat, 140

-Never show the discord within your family to the world, 162

Annex 7: Tropes (metaphor and simile) not Analysed in the Dissertation

A Dance of the Forests

-It is hard thing to lie with the living in your grave, 8 (metaphor)

- You have the fingers of the dead, 10 (metaphor)
- It was smoking like a perpetual volcano, 17 (simile)
- Bloodythirsty woman, 19 (metaphor)
- My body dissolve like alloy, 19 (simile)
- There must be happier deaths, 19 (metaphor)
- The wind cleaned him as he fell, 19 (simile)
- He talks like a lost lunatic, 25 (simile)
- The world was beaten like an egg, 26 (simile)
- I clasped the tree-hulk like a lover, 26 (simile)
- I serve the wind 27, (metaphor)
- There is a drunkard at the Wheel, 38 (metaphor)
- They drive them out like thieves, 39 (simile)
- Examines his nails with satisfaction, 40 (metaphor)
- Murete a leaf or two of my own house?, 40 (metaphor)
- They celebrate the gathering of the tribes, 41, 63 (metaphor)
- The desecration of forest body, 43 (metaphor)
- The tallest tree, 43-44 (metaphor)
- I may be at the leaves of the silk-cotton tree, 44 (metaphor)
- Skin of my lions, 44 (metaphor)
- The unbidden stranger, 44 (metaphor)
- Red in the color of the wind, 44 (metaphor)
- The canary will like you better, 47 (metaphor)
- A royal bird may not be tired, 47 (metaphor)
- Sell that man down the river, 52 (metaphor)
- The slight coffin, 52 (metaphor)
- The vessel, 52-53 (metaphor)
- Finger-bowl, 54 (metaphor)
- That roof is dangerous, 55 (metaphor)
- Blood that rules the sunset, 65 (metaphor)
- We have to choose our path to turn to the left or the right like the spider in the sand-pit and the great ball of eggs pressing on his back, 68 (simile)
- Shall I preserve you like a riddle?, 68 (simile)

- The ring of scourges was complete and my hair rose on its tails like scorpions, 69 (simile)
- We have tasted the night thickness of the forest like the nails of a jealous wife, 73 (simile)
- The mirror of original nakedness, 76 (metaphor)

The Swamp Dwellers

- A bloody-thirsty woman, 83 (metaphor)
- Are you sure they didn't take your own skin with them...you old crocodile?, 84 (metaphor)
- You took me to the point where the streams meet, 85 (metaphor)
- The bed of the river, 86 (metaphor)
- The river bed, 86 (metaphor)
- If you do not remember this, you're too old to lie on another river bed, 86 (metaphor)
- Down the river, 88; 90 (metaphor)
- This is where the river ends, 89 (metaphor)
- One day is just like another, 90 (simile)
- He rushed out like a madman, 92 (simile)
- The birth of the world, 93 (metaphor)
- Chairs which spin like a top, 95 (simile)
- The swollen stream, 97 (metaphor)
- Even when it rained, the soil let the water run right through it and join some stream in the womb of the earth, 98 (metaphor)
- Smell the sweetness of lemon leaves, 99 (metaphor)
- I am too old to be a pilgrim to his grave, 103 (metaphor)
- He breathes a foreign air, 103 (metaphor)
- I lived under his roof, 104 (metaphor)
- The fourth circumcision, 105 (metaphor)

The Strong Breed

- He comes crawling round here like some horrible insect, 116 (simile)

- You have a head like a spider's egg, and your mouth driddles like a roof, 119
- The next town, 120 (metaphor)
- There is peace in being a stranger, 123 (metaphor)
- There is a cold wind coming in, 125 (metaphor)
- We don't want to have to burn down the house, 128 (metaphor)
- A quick mouth, 129 (metaphor)
- They were born to carry suffering like a hat, 131
- What made him run like a coward?, 131
- It is only a strong breed that can take this boat to the river after year and wax stronger on it, 133 (metaphor)
- No woman survives the bearing of the strong ones, 133 (metaphor)
- Sunma fly at him, clawing at his face like a crazed tigress, 135 (simile)
- They crept like sick dogs, 146 (simile)

The Road

- The stream of time, 150 (metaphor)
- White color deserves white teeth, 152 (metaphor)
- I will have to thrashed like a horse, 154 (simile)
- Showers of crystal flying on broken souls, 159 (metaphor)
- It is a market of stale meat, noisy with flies and quarrelsome with old women, 159 (metaphor)
- We were riding the Wall like a victory horse, 164 (simile)
- Professor will cockroach you like an old newspaper, 164 (simile)
- A dog is Ogun's meat, 165 (metaphor)
- Kill us a dog, 165 (metaphor)
- Sergeant... treated his tanker like a child's toy?, 167 (simile)
- You remind me of a spider, 169 (metaphor)
- You are living just like a spider, 169 (simile)
- My legs are dead, 175 (metaphor)
- The lunatic asylum of the prison, 176 (metaphor)
- He lies like a Lagos girl, 177 (simile)
- Stay in one spot like a spider, 177 (simile)

- The road and the spider lie gloating, then the fly buzzes along like a happy fool, 178 (simile)
- There isn't any driver in the whole Africa who commands the steering wheel like you, 178 (metaphor)
- Moanked like a dog whose legs have been broken up by a motor car, 186 (simile)
- Drinks like a camel, 187 (simile)
- A man of books, 189 (metaphor)
- I was only born in a lorry, 189 (metaphor)
- The bales of stockfish nearly reached the sky, 190 (metaphor)
- If Carter Bridge had been joined above the road, the road of dried fish would have touched it, 190 (metaphor)
- Buried in stockfish. It was all I remembered for a long time, the smell of sockfish, 190 (metaphor)
- Torn bodies on the road all smell of stockfish..., 190 (metaphor)
- An increasing rumble of metallic wheels on stone, 192 (metaphor)
- The dead will be glad they are dead, 192 (metaphor)
- You found no broken words where the bridge swallowed them?, 195 (metaphor)
- The bridge, 195 (metaphor)
- It was a full load, 196 (metaphor)
- The broken flesh, 196 (metaphor)
- Stacks of beheaded fish, 196 (metaphor)
- The smell of stockfish, 196 (metaphor)
- The broken bridge, 196 (metaphor)
- The gates would never open wide enough to take it, not in our burial-ground, 196 (metaphor)
- The plants are rotten, 197 (metaphor)
- The rotten edge, 197 (metaphor)
- There is this other joke of the fisherman, slapping a loaded net against the sandbank. When the road is dry it runs into the river. The rock is a woman you understand, so is the road, 197 (metaphor)
- Below that bridge, a black rise of buttocks, two unyielding thighs and that red

- trickle like a woman washing her monthly pain in a river, 197 (metaphor)
- Kill us a dog, 198 (metaphor)
 - May we never walk when the road waits, famished, 199 (metaphor)
 - Like flies you prove it, 200 (simile)
 - The ink has faded on most of them, 202 (metaphor)
 - The Wall...the day it crashed to the ground, 205 (metaphor)
 - The Word is a terrible fire, 206 (metaphor)
 - You lie like a prophet, 206 (simile)
 - Truth...is scum risen on the froth of wine, 207
 - Be like a bat, 207 (metaphor)
 - It was determined to die. Like those wilful dogs getting in the wheels, 298 (metaphor)
 - They talk with matchets, 208 (metaphor)
 - I've got his blood all over me, 209 (metaphor)
 - Mortuary claims, 210 (metaphor)
 - Money has been left for me in more unlikely places believe me, 211 (metaphor)
 - At least wait until I am back on the road before you collect tolls, 211 (metaphor)
 - Samson has gone to look at the spiders, 211 (metaphor)
 - He keeps poking the web gently with a stick, 211 (metaphor)
 - A tree had fallen accross the road and our driver didn't see it in time, 213 (metaphor)
 - The dog-eater, 214 (metaphor)
 - The sacrificial knives of those men were right at our backs, 215 (metaphor)
 - We were at the front together, 216 (metaphor)
 - He drove his tanker like a tank, 216 (simile)
 - He was huge himself, like his truck, 216 (simile)
 - And a voice like a referee's whistle, 216 (simile)
 - Like a battlefield they always say. Like a battlefield, 219 (simile)
 - This is not war, 219 (metaphor)
 - You bloody dealer in death, 219 (metaphor)
 - Whole Forests are broken up, 220 (metaphor)
 - That word...was full-bellied, 220 (metaphor)
 - That word...a trophy from war, 220 (metaphor)

- This word rose in pride above spiked bushes, 220 (metaphor)
- I feel like working, 220 (metaphor)
- A cross of the tender frond, 222 (metaphor)
- 'E done chop bribe in face dey shine like tomato, 226 (simile)
- The final gate to the word, 226 (metaphor)
- Be even like the road itself, 228 (metaphor)
- Breathe like the road, be even like the road itself, 229 (metaphor)
- The dew of drought settled on my feet, 231 (metaphor)
- Coiled snake on Mysteries, 231 (metaphor)

The Lion and the Jewel

- What is a jewel to pigs?, 5 (metaphor)
- My love will open your mind like chaste leaf in the morning, when the sun first touches it, 7 (metaphor)
- I will stand against earth, heaven, and nine hells, 8 (metaphor)
- On my head let fall their scorn, 8 (metaphor)
- No lawful wedded wife shall eat the leavings off my plate, 9 (metaphor)
- The man from the outside world, 11 (metaphor)
- The stranger with the one-eyed box, 11 (metaphor)
- New horse, this one has only two feet, 11 (metaphor)
- Feasting eyes on the images, 11 (metaphor)
- You looked as if, at that moment, the sun himself had been your lover, 11 (metaphor)
- His image is in a little corner somewhere in the book, and even that corner he shares with one of the village latrines, 12 (metaphor)
- The dug-out village latrine, 13 (metaphor)
- You are dressed like him, 14 (simile)
- You look like him, 14 (simile)
- You think like him, 14 (simile)
- The four wheels, 15 (metaphor)
- The book of images, 20 (metaphor)
- My images have taught all the rest, 21 (metaphor)

- Old bag, 21 (metaphor)
- See how the water glistens on my face like the dew-moistened leaves on a Harmattan morning, 22 (simile)
- His face is like a leather piece torn rudely from the saddle of his horse, 22 (simile)
- Come and supper to his house tonight, 22 (metaphor)
- It was prisoned who were brought to do the hard part to break the jungle's back, 23 (metaphor)
- Be Sharp and sweet like the Swift Sting of a vicious wasp for there the pleasure lies – the cooling aftermath, 25 (metaphor)
- Your anger flows in my blood stream, 26 (metaphor)
- Hunt the leopard and the boat at night, 27 (metaphor)
- My vein of life run dry, my manhood gone, 28 (metaphor)
- Like a snake he came at me, like a rag he went back, a limp rag, smeared in shame, 30 (simile)
- This moment our star sits in the centre of the sky, 31 (metaphor)
- Your betrothed is supping with the Lion, 33 (metaphor)
- Take a farm for a season, 33 (metaphor)
- Is a man's bedroom to be made naked to any flea that changes to wander though?, 37 (metaphor)
- There must be many men who build their loft to fit your height, 39 (metaphor)
- To take one little story, 40 (metaphor)
- He grew the taste for ground corn and pepper, 40 (metaphor)
- There are heads and skins of leopards hung around his council room. But the market is also full of them, 42 (metaphor)
- The fox is said to be wise so cunning that he stalks and dines on new-hatched chickens, 42 (metaphor)
- My voice will be the sand between two grinding stones, 43 (metaphor)
- The child still thinks she is wiser than the cotton head of age, 44 (metaphor)
- Have the village lads begun to gather at your door?, 44 (metaphor)
- We shall begin by cutting stamps for our own village alone, 47 (metaphor)
- Among the bridge and the murderous roads below the humming birds, 47 (metaphor)

- The skin of progress, 48 (metaphor)
- Words are like beetles, 48 (simile)
- I'll come and see you whipped like a dog, 50 (simile)
- You shall be as round-bellied as a full moon in a low sky, 57 (metaphor)

Kongi's Harvest

- To eat the first New Yan, 63 (metaphor)
- The sun is the face, 67 (metaphor)
- Did you not see us lead twins by the hand?, 67 (metaphor)
- The royal python may be got at hissing, but it seems then scorpion's tail is fire, 68 (metaphor)
- The tunnel passes through the hill's belly, 68 (metaphor)
- The drums are news by shaped, 69 (metaphor)
- Last year's sands are stele at the source unruffled, 74 (metaphor)
- The whole bloody lot of them, 79 (metaphor)
- My memory is like a basket when I've had a few bears, 79 (simile)
- A little bit of dry bread every stomach devils, 80 (metaphor)
- I suffer from ulcers, 83 (metaphor)
- A bit of the Harvest before the banquet, 85 (metaphor)
- A coiled make is beautiful asleep a velvet bolster laid on flowers, 88 (metaphor)
- Do not fool with one whose boson ripples as a python coiled in wait for rabbits, 88 (metaphor)
- They are sleeping, 89 (metaphor)
- They are sleeping, 90 (metaphor)
- They are really out, 90 (metaphor)
- They quarrel like women and they fall asleep, 90 (simile)
- They would lay down their lives for you, 91 (metaphor)
- Place of meditation, 92 (metaphor)
- Kingship is a role, 95 (metaphor)
- The Ears of States, 96 (metaphor)
- Come through the gates tonight. I want you in me, 98 (metaphor)
- I am swollen like prize Yam under earth, but the all harvest must wait its

season, 98 (simile)

-There is no reason for needs busting, 98 (metaphor)

-I am opened tonight. I am soil from the final rains, 98 (metaphor)

-The last might, 99 (metaphor)

-This bee hum fit for the world's ruling heads jammed in annual congress, 103 (metaphor)

-For us, even the dead lend their eues and ears, as do also the unborn, 103 (metaphor)

-The Ears of wind on dry maize leaves, 104 (metaphor)

-She has left victims on her path like sugar cane pulp aqueezed dry, 104 (simile)

-She'll shave your skull and lubricate it in oil, 104 (metaphor)

-Their yam is pounded, not with the pestle but with stamp and a pad of violet ink, 109 (metaphor)

-The drums were silenced long before you, 112 (metaphor)

-The wooden box, 113 (metaphor)

-The witch of night clubs, 114 (metaphor)

-Our mallets' weight, 115 (metaphor)

-Our hands are like sand-paper, 116 (metaphor)

-Our fingernails are clipped, 116 (metaphor)

-Our lungs are filled with sawdust, 116 (metaphor)

-Is like pregnancy, never but makes its proclamation, 118 (metaphor)

-Are as the sedes in a game of 'ayo' when it comes to juggling, 119 (metaphor)

-The job of cooking the new ya mis theirs, 121 (metaphor)

-I shall come personally and supervise the tasting – after the yam is cooked, and after it is pounded, 122 (metaphor)

-Dance to Kongi's tunes, 123 (metaphor)

-The bridgroom does not strain his neck to see a bribe bound anyway for his bed-chamber, 123 (mataphor)

-Let you and I wait like the patient bridegroom, 123 (simile)

-They all have husbands, sons, and brothers rotting in forgotten places, 126 (metaphor)

-Let him take from the palm only its wine and not crucify lives upon it, 128 (mataphor)

- His eye fixed on Segi as a confident spider at a fly, 128 (metaphor)
- Let us see only what earth has fattened, not what has withered with it, 129 (metaphor)
- Let the yam be pounded, 129 (metaphor)
- The battle front, 134 (metaphor)
- As a bush-fire on dry corn stalks burns well, and with a fire crackle of northern wind behind it, 135 (metaphor)
- I drank from the stream of madness for a little while, 136 (metaphor)
- The frontier fence will lose its barbs at one touch of your purse, 137 (metaphor)
- First coming, 140 (metaphor)
- As the palm ghommid, in anger at the wine-tapper, 140 (metaphor)
- If the elephant does not warily step he will tread on a thorn and hobble like a pair of stilts, 140 (metaphor)
- The second coming, 141 (metaphor)

The Trials of Brother Jero

- I hope you have not come to stand in the way of Christ and his work, 150 (metaphor)
- I got here before any customers, 153 (metaphor)
- Women are a plague, 161 (metaphor)
- I have my own cross too, 162 (metaphor)
- Who would want to offer cola to a Chief Messenger?, 64 (metaphor)
- My cross has been lifted off my shoulders by the Prophet, 165 (metaphor)

Annex 8: Symbols

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RESUMEN EN ESPAÑOL

OBJECTIVOS DE ESTA INVESTIGACIÓN.

El objetivo general de este proyecto de investigación es investigar las obras dramáticas seleccionadas por Wole Soyinka a través de una lectura crítica. Se trata de identificar y localizar las características estéticas, y revelar sus valores y funciones exactas en las obras. Tan claro como sea posible, este estudio tiene como objetivo conseguir características estéticas de Wole Soyinka ampliamente conocidas, ya que pueden ser útiles toda clase de lectores, intelectuales y académicos. Así mismo, pueden resultar interesantes por razones políticas, sociales, religiosas, ambientales, etc. Las obras de Wole Soyinka que constituyen el corpus de esta tesis son: *A Dance of the Forests*, *The Swamp Dwellers*, *The Strong Breed*, *The Road*, *The Lion and the Jewel*, *Kongi's Harvest*, and *The Trials of Brother Jero*.

El término "estética" debe por derivación canalizar la investigación sobre la naturaleza del sentido y la percepción. Los temas claros de la estética se pueden dividir en los siguientes apartados: la verdad estética, la moral estética, estética como expresión, la subjetividad de la estética, etc. Esto también puede significar que la problemática de la estética encaja en los temas globales de la cultura, incluyendo el de la verdad en el dominio del conocimiento, etc. Además, la estética puede dar repuesta al porque un monarca está en la política, la iglesia en la religión, el capital en la economía, y la clase media en la sociedad. En este sentido, la estética aborda libremente todos los aspectos de la vida humana.

Por otra parte, este estudio trata de las características estéticas de Wole Soyinka desde del punto de vista de la literatura, y en este sentido, parece claro que nuestra principal preocupación es analizar las características estéticas literarias del dramaturgo. La pregunta "¿Qué es la literatura" es el punto de partida de la estética literaria. Hay una distinción entre una característica textual y una característica estética. Una característica textual es una característica de estilo, contenido, o estructura. Estas son las características poseídas por todos los textos. Una característica estética se identifica por un lector, en una obra literaria, a través de un juicio estético como lo que podríamos llamar una constelación de características textuales. Una constelación de características textuales constituye una característica estética de una obra en particular. Una característica estética es una constelación de características textuales, el marcador de la identidad literaria de un autor que se identifica sólo a través

de una sensibilidad y juicio estético. La necesidad de asumir la existencia de la sensibilidad estética surge en la teoría de la superveniencia porque quiere evitar la reducción de una característica estética en una característica textual, implicando que el único lector posee una sensibilidad estética que le permita reconocer los rasgos estéticos de la obra.

La estética es un término muy ambiguo en la actualidad, debido principalmente a la cantidad de muchas críticas. Se podría definir como una constelación de percepciones a través de la sensibilidad literaria. Soyinka construye su teoría del drama con el material de su tradición yoruba: rituales, ritos, ceremonias, festivales, etc. Este hecho justifica en sus obras, el uso de los metarrelatos que fueron legitimados durante el siglo XX y que no figuran en sus obras en sus configuraciones convencionales y familiares. Como Ulli Beier en su edición *Introduction to African Literature*, no hay teatro convencional en la tradición yoruba. Las representaciones dramáticas de acontecimientos históricos, que a menudo forman parte de las fiestas religiosas, impulsan a actuar pero no están destinados como entretenimiento, ni tienen porque producir una clase profesional de los actores.

La cita de Ulli Beier establece una visión general sobre el teatro africano. Lo que quiere decir es que, en África, no hay criterios claros establecidos para el drama con el fin de tener un teatro convencional. Lo que es cierto para la comunidad Yoruba también es válido para otras comunidades africanas. Aparte de este teatro religioso, existen obras costumbristas y saynettes que describen la vida cotidiana retratando a las personas más importantes de la comunidad en particular burlándose ellos.

En el desarrollo del drama africano moderno, la supervivencia de algunas de las características del drama tradicional africano se notará desde muy temprano. Este hecho sin embargo no impide que este género literario en general, cumpla con los criterios universales de drama. Para ser reconocido públicamente han de superar pruebas de diversa naturaleza hasta que sean aceptados no solo como africanos sino sobre todo como obras de teatro puro y simple. Este hecho implica que Martin Esslin añade que, con el fin de llegar a la aceptación verdaderamente universal una obra debe cumplir ambas condiciones: debe tener un tema, la materia que sea accesible para el número máximo de diferentes sociedades, y debe ser un ejemplo de la arte supremo en la construcción y el lenguaje.

La estética también se puede definir como el estudio formal del arte, especialmente en relación con el goce o el estudio de la belleza. También se puede definir como la descripción de un objeto o una obra de arte que muestra una gran belleza. La estética se refiere a la belleza, al arte, y la comprensión de las cosas bellas. Como Obafemi dice, la estética se ocupa de cualquier forma de arte y de las artes teatrales, en particular, que es un arte corporativo multidimensional, multisensorial que depende de su contexto social y su público. Esto implica una revalorización del contexto sociológico y de los otros imperativos materiales de la cultura en el desarrollo histórico del país desde el principio hasta el presente. Existe cada escritor dentro de una sociedad y como miembro de dicha sociedad, se preocupa a sí mismo con los problemas que surgen en su seno.

Una vez más, las siete obras de teatro se han seleccionado principalmente porque el presente tema se discute a fondo en ellos. Ellos plantean la cuestión de la estética que aborda todos los aspectos de la vida humana. Para este efecto, la estética se asocia con marcos estéticos y formas dramáticas: la política y la estética, las cuestiones sociales y políticas, las variaciones formales; teatralidad: la trama, estructuras dramáticas y efectos, danza, música, mimo, canciones y acciones corporales; variaciones lingüísticas, variaciones intertextuales, proverbios y rendimiento.

LAS CARACTERÍSTICAS ESTÉTICAS EN TEATRO DE WOLE SOYINKA.

Como primer paso, esbozamos las características a través de los textuales. Tales usos componen una constelación que permite al lector emitir juicios estéticos. En este proyecto de investigación la naturaleza de las categorías y las formas de esas características estéticas, así como las funciones que cumplen, los mensajes específicos y exactos, las ideas que transmiten e ideologías que vehiculan en las obras seleccionadas por Wole Soyinka son las preocupaciones más importantes. En primer lugar, una de las preocupaciones de la estética ha sido la evaluación negativa del arte africano, así como la afirmación de que la categoría del realismo no se aplica al arte africano. Esto también puede significar que los artistas africanos son incapaces de realizar representaciones realistas.

William Abraham sostiene que tales críticas pierden el sentido del arte africano. Se ha demostrado que el arte africano es a la vez realista y figurativo, dependiendo de

la función social específica. La preocupación de Abraham es mostrar que la cultura africana incluye necesariamente el arte africano, así como expresiones de una cosmología africana esencial.

Sin embargo, la posición de Abraham es típica, es la de una esteticista africano cuyos objetivos son principalmente la elaboración de las leyes estéticas generales. Este esfuerzo se ha ampliado de manera significativa a lo que se conoce como Estética Negra, un movimiento arraigado en la década de 1960 contra el colonialismo en África. El trabajo de los estudiosos de la diáspora, como Addison Gayle *The Black Aesthetics* (1972), fue vital para el proceso de la estética africana, ya que ofrece un conjunto de herramientas teóricas claramente definidas para el análisis de las artes negras y el estudio de sus cualidades estéticas propias.

En consecuencia, la estética negra está ligada a la conciencia de la persona negra de una realidad social que ha sido negada y también a su intento de negar claridad por medio de un contador la realidad de los valores de la gente negra. Por lo tanto, el objetivo es fundar o establecer un conjunto de principios estéticos que hará justicia a la calidad de las obras negras. Es en este caso, la consigna de "Negro es hermoso" aparece.

En gran parte, esta búsqueda de una cultura Pan - Africana esencial es lo que anima a uno de los movimientos culturales más antiguos y más persistentes del siglo XX: la negritud, que comenzó en los 1930 s en Francia por Leopold Sédar Senghor y Aimé Césaire, entre otros, que buscó definir y representar el núcleo esencial de los valores africanos que se concreta en la experiencia espiritual de África. En el caso de Senghor esto tomó la forma de una preocupación por la representación de la presencia ancestral en la literatura y de una revalorización positiva de la identidad negra.

Además, para Senghor, el arte africano se concibe como inherentemente comprometido porque es intrínsecamente social y comunitario, en contraposición al individualismo del arte europeo. Senghor también es a menudo citado por haber proclamado "La emoción es negra como la razón es griega."

Para Soyinka, la mayor debilidad de la negritud es que se solo articular en lugar de promulgar su identidad radical. Como dice Soyinka, "un tigre no pronuncia su tigritud, sino que se abalanza sobre su presa". Su influencia es evidente en toda la ideología de la conciencia nueva especialmente en algunos de los intentos para producir una estética anti colonial africana.

Sin embargo, el compromiso de Soyinka de desarrollar una estética africana distinta es uno de los objetivos más ambiciosos entre los escritores africanos. Se produce una estética cosmológica de su lectura de la cultura Yoruba mediada por la concepción de Nietzsche de la mitología griega en nacimiento de la tragedia, la configuración de su propia teoría de la tragedia. Según Soyinka, el arte yoruba es tan mimético y transformador de la estructura de la cosmología tradicional Yoruba en oposición a la tradición del "arte por el arte".

Además, sostiene que la realidad africana puede ser mejor entendida como un habita simultánea del mundo de los vivos y los muertos, así como el presente y el pasado. Así, la teoría de la mimesis de Soyinka trabaja con una idea más compleja de la realidad que las ofrecidas en el texto fundacional de la teoría mimética o la poética de Aristóteles.

Cuando se empezó a preguntarse si la crítica de Soyinka se había agotado y no podría decir nada nuevo de los talentos más complejos y prodigiosos de África, llegó un estudio revisionista de uno de los miembros del moribundo "Ibadian Ife group" que ofrece una aproximación entre escritos literarios de Soyinka y su activismo político. Biodun Jeyifo trae la crítica de Soyinka al día, la actualiza a integrar sistemáticamente sus diferentes fases, y también proporciona uno de los análisis más exhaustivos y profundos de las obras de ficción de Soyinka construyendo una postura post - colonial, incluso un Wole Soyinka posmodernista.

La estructura y el contenido de la revisión de la literatura en general, y los resultados de la misma, en particular, dejan claro que la estética es un término muy ambiguo en la actualidad. La razón es que hay tantas críticas sobre su aplicación. Es que se utiliza muy a menudo, pero por lo general se refiere a las cualidades de las propias obras de teatro. Esas cualidades son el lenguaje, los argumentos, la recepción, la forma en que uno reacciona, etc. La suma de todos esos aspectos hace posible la percepción de las cualidades estéticas. No sólo el lenguaje, sino también la forma en que uno analiza variaciones intertextuales, parcelas, acciones físicas, proverbios, canciones, danza, la manera en que la música suena en esas obras dramáticas forman los valores estéticos. Por lo tanto, el valor estético no es nada definitivo, nada objetivo, nada concreto. Es sólo una constelación de percepciones, de aspectos de las obras de teatro. Además, junto con la otra parte del título de la tesis, es el nombre del autor Wole Soyinka, el sintagma nominal "características estéticas de las obras de Wole

Soyinka" inspira más ambigüedades porque Soyinka construye su teoría del drama con el material de su tradición Yoruba: rituales, ritos, ceremonias, festivales, etc. Una vez más, este hecho justifica el uso en sus obras de los metarrelatos que con movimiento imaginativo y discursivamente legitimado del siglo XX no figuran en sus obras en sus configuraciones convencionales y familiares.

La noción de marco significa la forma en que un artista se centra en algo. Proviene la fotografía. El papel de la trama es cómo el significado de lo que está dentro se obtiene a través del contexto, cómo el exterior juega el papel importante en la interpretación de las cosas, las percepciones y visiones. Cualquier apreciación estética se basa en el intercambio entre lo que está dentro y lo que está fuera. El marco se refiere a la relación entre el interior y el exterior. Así, el teatro, cualquier obra de teatro y de otros géneros literarios, el marco implica la forma de ver el teatro, y cómo el teatro te hace ver su tema, como tiene que ser interpretado, como tiene que ser visualizado. Por lo tanto, los efectos estéticos se producen a través del uso del lenguaje, mediante el uso de proverbios. Todos los capítulos contribuyen a especificar la calidad estética de las obras de teatro, las atribuciones, las percepciones de las obras de teatro.

La estética es un término muy ambiguo hoy porque hay muchas críticas sobre su aplicación. En realidad, se procede del romanticismo alemán, y se utiliza muy a menudo, pero por lo general se refiere a las cualidades propias de las obras de teatro. Esas cualidades son el lenguaje, los argumentos, la recepción, la forma en que uno reacciona, etc. La suma de todos esos aspectos hace posible la percepción de las cualidades estéticas. No sólo el lenguaje, sino también la forma en que uno analiza las variaciones intertextuales, parcelas, acciones físicas, proverbios, canciones, danza, música, etc.

ALGUNAS CONSIDERACIONES TEÓRICAS

El análisis y el comentario se harán a través las obras de Wole Soyinka, y en diferentes categorías según cuestiones políticas. En este sentido, a los primeros conceptos de "marcos estéticos" y "formas dramáticas", este estudio suma otros dos: "la estética y la política" y "enmarcar cuestiones políticas". Además, los antecedentes históricos "la estética y la política", "la estética y otras ciencias", la estética, el realismo,

romanticismo, el marxismo, y post-estructuralismo " y "el marco" arrojaran algo más de luz.

La influencia de Shakespeare en otros escritores es intensa. Thomas Carlyle en su *The Hero as Poet* (1841) escribe que, "Sí, esto Shakespeare es nuestro; nosotros lo producimos, hablamos y pensamos por él; somos de la misma sangre y amable con él." A través de su influencia a Karl Marx, las obras de Shakespeare tenían una influencia formativa en el desarrollo del marxismo y la metodología de la Teoría Crítica de la Escuela de Frankfurt. La dialéctica era el terreno filosófico a través de lo cual discurría la influencia. De esta manera, la influencia de Shakespeare estaba en las raíces de la teoría estética dialéctica de la Escuela de Frankfurt. El marco estético de Shakespeare en *The Tempest* podría también utilizarse como fuente de inspiración para Wole Soyinka, particularmente en su *A Dance of the Forests* y *The Lion and the Jewel* donde logra enmarcar el tema del colonialismo. Este hecho es claro cuando esta obra se ve a través de la lente de la teoría poscolonial, y hacemos comentarios sobre la trama, el escenario y los personajes.

Teniendo en cuenta esta realidad, este proyecto de investigación sobre las obras de Soyinka muestra rastros e indicios de esos escritores que utilizan el drama, la poesía, la novela, en una palabra, la literatura como un medio para hacer revoluciones. En relación con esto, Georgi Dimitrov en su Discurso pronunciado en el Club de los Escritores en Moscú hace referencia de Georg Lukács 'Realism in the Balance' y mencionó que, en su día la burguesía revolucionaria llevó a cabo una lucha violenta para el interés de su propia clase; hizo uso de todos los medios a su alcance, incluida la literatura imaginativa.

En este nivel, la lectura de las obras de teatro de Wole Soyinka muestra marcos estéticos de lucha política de este tipo. Este análisis se desarrollará esto, haciendo uso también del pensamiento crítico alemán de los autores clásicos para analizar los marcos estéticos de Soyinka. Las categorías estéticas tradicionales son la comedia y la tragedia, la lírica, la épica y la dramática.

Un concepto de la teoría de la comunicación en general y la teoría de los movimientos sociales que se pueden aplicar fructíferamente a la zona de la traducción es el concepto de marco. El término se deriva del trabajo seminal de *Frame Analysis* de Ervin Goffman (1974), donde se examina "la organización de la experiencia" en

una amplia franja de la actividad humana, que incluye también la participación del lector / público en una obra.

La metáfora del bastidor se ha reavivado en la teoría de los movimientos sociales, donde la construcción y la interpretación de los hechos y condiciones. Se trata de asignar, significar e interpretar eventos y condiciones relevantes en formas que tienen la intención de movilizar partidarios y electores potenciales, para reunir apoyo y desmovilizar a los antagonistas.

Para el escritor y crítico keniano Ngugi wa Thiong'o, es la transferencia de Soyinka de la acción revolucionaria colectiva e individual lo que quita su potencial radical a su labor. Incluso un crítico marxista de otro modo simpático, Chidi Amuta, le resulta difícil conciliar el intento de Soyinka a "proferir explicaciones míticas y resoluciones para los problemas sociales que pertenecen habitualmente al ámbito de la realidad histórica y la experiencia humana empírica" con su secular aprecio radical de las divisiones de clase dentro de la formación social de Nigeria.

Wole Soyinka rechaza la opinión de lo que él llama el "leftocracy", argumentando y demostrando que su crítica es sintomática de un marcado desconocimiento de la relación entre el arte y la vida en general. La provincia del artista, no excluye un interés directo en la clase, los posibles promotores socio-económicos, psicológicos y de otra índole de bienestar de sus personajes, en el escenario o en el papel, no es, como no puede válidamente manifestarse en cualquier caso, dado el trabajo sin tener en su procedencia inmediata la totalidad o más de estos diversos contribuyentes a la historia de ese personaje, o su destino cuando cae la cortina [...] Una obra, una novela, una poema, una pintura o cualquier otra composición creativa no es un tesis sobre la condición última del hombre. Incluso el marxismo reconoce que la teoría revolucionaria es incompleta en sí mismo; la praxis, la operación de esa teoría es lo que constituye la prueba infalible de la teoría.

Los marxistas han encontrado que es muy difícil comprometerse con Soyinka, ya que sus preocupaciones políticas no están fundamentalmente en desacuerdo con los ideales socialistas, a pesar de que no se describe a sí mismo como un marxista. Sin embargo, como siempre, el socialismo preferido de Soyinka es un tipo que se libera de la rigidez del dogma marxista y se adapta al contexto histórico local e inmediato.

En un gesto rápido de la recuperación, el veterano crítico marxista F. Odun Balogn sostiene que, lejos de ser una expresión de conservadurismo, la obra de

Soyinka es socialista no sólo en términos de su compromiso con el igualitarismo, sino también en su eco de la opinión de Lenin de que el marxismo siempre fue un sistema general para ajustar, para adaptarse a cada instancia de elaboración histórica.

Soyinka está de acuerdo con Viktor Shklovski y otros formalistas rusos - y, dada profunda inversión de Soyinka en el drama, se podría incluir Bertold Brecht, así - la creencia de que el hábito devora a su propia esposa, que adormece la mente y los efectos de un cierre masivo en temas de proceso. Esto es, de hecho, una de las aportaciones más distintivas que Soyinka ha hecho a la lectura y la escritura de la política africana contemporánea y la cultura. Él ha ido más allá de la idea de identidad como una oposición absoluta entre el Yo y el Otro a una concepción de la identidad en la que dichos conceptos son por sí mismas cuestionados o transferidos a un marco o idioma diferente en el que se hacen para significar otra manera. El cambio de Soyinka de la base axiomática de conocimiento de la mitología europea a la mitología africana le capacita no sólo para revalorizar la razón postcolonial sino también para impulsar un reordenamiento fundamental de la jerarquía epistémica. De esta manera, Soyinka prefiere un método para leer el mundial desde abajo, una dialéctica poscolonial verdadera.

Además este estudio se apoya en Norman Friedman, quien describió una lista completa de argumentos. Se basa en una clasificación por RS Crane y añade consideraciones de éxito, la responsabilidad, el atractivo y el impacto en el receptor. La trama se examinará a través de la teoría de Basile Marius Ngassaki. Consiste en la combinación de la teoría de Ducrot y Todorov y de Paulme. El análisis de las variaciones intertextuales se llevará a cabo inspirándose en las teorías y el enfoque de Gerard Genette porque cree en la capacidad de la crítica para localizar y describir la significación de un texto, incluso si ese significado se refiere a una relación intertextual entre un texto y otros textos. Gerard Genette agrupa el concepto intertextualidad junto con el: la paratextualidad, la metatextualidad, la hipertextualidad y la architextualidad. El concepto de intertextualidad de Genette incluye pues: la cita, el plagio, la alusión y la referencia.

JUSTIFICACIÓN DEL CORPUS DE TEXTOS ANALIZADOS.

El corpus de esta tesis está constituido por siete obras dramáticas de Wole Soyinka seleccionadas en sus colecciones 1 y 2. Son : *A Dance of the Forests*, *The Swamp Dwellers*, *The Strong Breed*, *The Road*, *The Lion and the Jewel*, *Kongi's Harvest*, and *The Trials of Brother Jero*. La elección de estas obras pueden estar justificada por el hecho de que mejor se adaptan al tema para su exploración ha ayudado a descifrar las diferentes categorías de características estéticas y sus valores y funciones. Las siete obras han sido seleccionadas principalmente porque, a través de su estética y sus funciones, probablemente están vinculadas por su preocupación por lo espiritual y lo social, con creencias y espiritual como fuerzas integradoras para la cohesión social. También trazan el desarrollo irónico y las consecuencias del progreso. Estos temas están comprometidos con las culturas de Nigeria. Sin embargo, dan cuenta de las culturas europeas, americanas y asiáticas.

A Dance of the Forests retrata la celebración de la fiesta: "the gathering of the tribes", incluyendo las personas que viven, los muertos, los seres sobrenaturales, Half-Child, los no nacidos, etc. Los participantes a la fiesta pertenecen a mundos diferentes y opuestos, generaciones, etc. Subsiguientes conflictos hacia el nacimiento de Half-Child, la muerte de Oremole que fue empujado hacia abajo de un árbol por Demoke, el protagonista y la lucha entre Ogun y Eshuoro.

En *The Swamp Dwellers* la tragedia es atribuible al destino, los dioses, la exploración de petróleo y la rivalidad filial y la subordinación. El destino toma la forma de inundaciones, que destruyen los cultivos y aseguran el hambre y la pobreza. Esto, con las moscas de la arena, refleja las inclemencias naturales de la geografía de la región, la infertilidad de los suelos aluviales y el hambre endémica. Los habitantes de los pantanos están obligados por el custodio representante de la tradición (el sacerdote local de la deidad serpiente de la tierra) Kadiye, a hacer sacrificios rituales y permanecer fieles a los dioses. El sacerdocio aquí, sobre todo en su indiferencia y la opulencia en medio del sufrimiento, simbólicamente representa el liderazgo de Nigeria. Como Gobierno Federal, realiza el papel de opiáceos de predicar más y más sacrificio en la faz de la explotación política y económica de los habitantes de los pantanos. Pero Igwezu, el héroe del *The Swamp Dwellers* rechaza tanto su trágico destino y el remedio recomendado. Él, en efecto, toma como rehenes temporalmente

al jefe. Él ve el sacrificio tan inútil. Falta una filosofía claramente entendida. Un sacrificio fecundo es aquel en el que lo que se gana excede lo que se sacrificó.

The Strong Breed aborda en el festival Yoruba del Año Nuevo y el ritual de sacrificar un "portador" de la maldad del año anterior. Eman es un extranjero que ha encontrado la paz en este pueblo; él no tiene ningún deseo de irse. Sunma, un maestro, quiere pasar con él el año nuevo, lejos de la fiesta. Los habitantes del pueblo quieren sacrificar Ifada, un niño indefenso y sin voluntad. Omae, la prometida de Eman, que ha muerto dando vida a su hijo, se le aparece y Eman finalmente cumple su tarea y murió como portador.

The Road es una obra realista que incorpora elementos del teatro de absurdo. Es una comedia de clases, o con la intención similar. La acción abarca solo un día. La escena es un camino, presumiblemente en Nigeria con una iglesia cercana, partes de los cuales están también en el escenario. El personaje central es Profesor. Representa la civilización y la alfabetización. Él tiene el poder de la palabra, y este poder lo sostiene por encima de sus compañeros. El Profesor utiliza esta alfabetización para forjar documentos como carné de conducir. Él es un personaje contradictorio, y la palabra es útil y no siempre es fiel a la verdad. Esta obra es una alegoría religiosa con la tensión contenida entre la carretera y la Palabra.

The Lion and the Jewel aborda un tema popular en la literatura africana, el conflicto entre la modernización y el mantenimiento de la tradición. En gran parte dejando aparte al personaje Lakunle maestro de escuela de profundidad o de interés, Soyinka le construye como distante (hay simbolismo claro en el hecho de que su traje moderno no le queda bien) y pomposo. Está situado en el pueblo Yoruba de Ilunjinle. Los personajes principales son Sidi (la joya), una verdadera belleza del pueblo y Baroka (el león), el Bale astuto y poderoso de la aldea, Lakunle, el joven maestro, influenciado por las costumbres occidentales, y Sadiku, el mayor de esposas de Baroka. Cómo el León caza la Joya es el tema de esta comedia obscena. Se centra en tres personajes principales. Baroka, el (jefe del pueblo) "Bale" de Ilunjinle, es el "león" en la obra. Es un hombre astuto de sesenta y dos años, que finge su impotencia para seducir a Sidi, la reina del pueblo. Sidi, una joven vanidosa, es la "joya" en la obra. Esta cortejada por Lakunle. Para seducir a Sidi, Baroka su halaga, exalta su belleza, y utiliza palabras románticas, adivinanzas profundas y proverbios. La victoria de Baroka sobre Lakunle que debería haber casado Sidi, pero no lo hace porque no quiere pagar

el precio de la novia, puede considerarse como el triunfo de los valores tradicionales yoruba sobre la influencia occidental y las ideas. Algunas personas también pueden considerarla como la victoria de la experiencia de las personas mayores sobre la juventud.

Kongi's Harvest aborda al dictador demente del estado de Isma que ha encarcelado y destronado al rey tradicional, Oba Danlola. Para legitimar su toma del poder, Kongi ha reclamado a la autoridad espiritual del Oba través de su consagración de los cultivos en el New Yam Festival. Esta obra de teatro es relevante al tema de este proyecto de investigación, ya que fuerza a los abusos de poder por los líderes de Nigeria, Nigeria es un país recientemente independiente.

The Trials of Brother Jero es una comedia satírica y alegre basada en las actividades del falso profeta de playa, Jero, Brother Jero, que describe su acercamiento a su "comercio" desde el comienzo de la obra. Chume es la víctima clásica del profeta. En *The Trials of Brother Jero*, los problemas sociales de la sociedad no son simplemente la hipocresía religiosa, que es prominente en la obra, sino también la decadencia moral, donde el desequilibrio marcial también está incrustado en el texto para indicar el desorden nacional total de la sociedad nigeriana.

CONCLUSIONES

MARCOS ESTÉTICOS, FORMAS DRAMÁTICAS Y LA INFLUENCIA DEL TEATRO POLÍTICO EUROPEO.

Los marcos estéticos y las formas dramáticas son la esencia o naturaleza de la literatura como una arte, es decir, la creación y re-creación de significado, el verdadero significado o realidad a través el proceso de observación e imaginación. Las formas dramáticas, son sinónimos de las categorías estéticas. Las formas dramáticas o categorías estéticas se refieren a los diferentes subgéneros literarios que los escritores utilizan para enmarcar su significado. Las formas dramáticas incluyen las siguientes categorías estéticas tradicionales: la comedia, la tragedia, la sátira, la lírica, épica, dramática, etc. Los conceptos "marcos estéticos" y "formas dramáticas" son principios esenciales y hacen que la literatura sea una disciplina. Forman parte de cómo la

literatura crea y recrea la realidad, y las funciones y valores de esta creación y recreación.

El enfoque de este estudio requiere fundamentos fuentes europeas del activismo político de Wole Soyinka a través de sus obras. Wole Soyinka tiene sus favoritos, son: Shakespeare, Charles Dickens, Tolstoi, Tony Morrison, etc. Esto también puede significar que Soyinka comparte doctrinas literarias de sus favoritos de una manera o de otra. Wole Soyinka considera Shakespeare como el favorito de todo el mundo y de todos los tiempos.

La sensibilidad literaria muestra que el nombre de Calibán, un personaje en *The Tempest* podría ser una alusión verbal de la palabra " canibal " que es igual en su significado al canibalismo. La influencia de Shakespeare en Soyinka es obvia porque escribe que las "generaciones serán caníbales" (p. 49), pues "los hombres siempre se comen unos a otros " (p. 50) en *A Dance of the Forests*, " estamos tan hambrientos que cuando las niñas tontas como que aparecen, las comemos " (P. 137) en *The Strong Breed*, "no puedes pretender ser un caníbal como Sergent Burma" (p . 165), en *The Road*, "que han elegido a ti mismo una verdadera caníbal de la especie femenina " (p. 104) en *Kongi's Harvest*. Además, la frase inicial de un diálogo en *Hamlet* de Shakespeare, que es "ser o no ser " podría haber inspirado la frase de Soyinka "llorar o no llorar " (p. 137) en *The Strong Breed*.

Este proyecto de investigación analizará *The Tempest* en detalle, e interpreta lo como una obra de teatro sobre el colonialismo porque Próspero viene a la isla de Sycorax, subyuga, gobierna la tierra e impone su propia cultura a los pueblos de la tierra. Empujar el nativo al lado, se pone al frente de los asuntos. Desplaza a la madre de Caliban y la trata como bestia. Tiene el control total sobre todo en la isla. Hace que Calibán trabaje cómo su sirviente y le pide una cosa oscura. Caliban se deshumaniza o es tratado como subhumano. Esto demuestra la actitud del colonizador de mirar hacia abajo en el pueblo colonizado. La interpretación de *The Tempest* a través la lente de postcolonialismo ve a Próspero como un colonialista con tintes racistas en su tratamiento de Calibán y Ariel, ambos de los cuales están subyugados por él, y el deseo de libertad. Calibán es el hijo de Sycorax, y el habitante original de la isla antes de la llegada de Próspero. Cuando *The Tempest* se ve a través del objetivo postcolonial, representa a los nativos americanos y a Próspero, al igual que al invasor británico.

Este estudio comienza con el lenguaje inicialmente, ya que por lo general aprecia las cosas de la forma en que han sido escritos, desde la forma en que la obra está escrita. Aparte de los problemas sociales que están dentro de las cuestiones políticas, hay muchas otras cuestiones como los problemas ambientales, problemas ecológicos, cuestiones climáticas, cuestiones de género, cuestiones de fronteras, cuestiones lingüísticas, etc. Esta investigación considera y escribe que "las cuestiones políticas y sociales" son problemas que afectan directamente o indirectamente a los miembros de la sociedad y a los procesos mediante los cuales los grupos de personas toman decisiones colectivas. La elección, el gobernante de un país, la democracia, la dictadura son formas y temas específicos de la política. Hay otras interacciones que tienen que ser tomadas en consideración. Incorporan la educación corporativa y las instituciones religiosas. Básicamente, consiste en las relaciones sociales y las cuestiones que implican autoridad o poder. Las cuestiones sociales son consideradas como problemas y controversias generalmente relacionados con los valores morales, la tradición y la religión a menudo desempeña un papel importante. Los temas sociales específicos incluyen los derechos de animales, la iglesia y el estado, el crimen y el castigo, la economía, la educación, el medio ambiente, los derechos humanos, la pobreza, el desempleo, el género, etc. Hay problemas que este estudio define directamente como socio-político: la corrupción, la guerra, el terror, la violencia, etc.

En Nigeria, Soyinka es altamente contextualizado. No es visto como un "imponente, extranjero, genio dramático". Es Yoruba; "Ijegba"; "Old Boy of Government"; "Uno de los siete magníficos" (es decir, uno de los fundadores de la Cofradía Piratas); "been-to"; "Entrometida periodista"; "Político de aficionado"; Pagan; Mariscal de Seguridad de Carretera; Profesor; "Enemigo de Gowon"; "Amigo de Fajuyi"; "Socialista"; "Progresista"; "Revolucionario"; "Anti-Revolucionario"; "Humanista Liberal" ... y así sucesivamente. Es, sin duda, una fuerza significativa en el teatro y la sociedad nigeriana; creador de grupos teatrales y de oportunidades; pionero del teatro, fabricante de declaraciones de gran alcance, etc.

Mario Relich en su artículo "Soyinka's Beggars' Opera" establece una relación un tipo de intertextualidad literaria que se puede ver entre Soyinka y Bertold Brecht. "Call it the Beggars' Opera if you insist. Eso es lo que toda la nación está haciendo. Estas palabras del personaje llamado el Disc Jockey introduciendo la *Ópera Wonyosi* que marcó la pauta de la versión africanizada de Bertold Brecht y Kurt Weill *Three*

Penny Opera por Wole Soyinka. Se ha convertido en una fábula sobre mafiosos expatriados nigerianos y "asesores de la seguridad" en los días crepusculares de la República Centrafricana de Bokassa.

En cuanto los líderes mendigos, su cinismo astuto se hace eco original de cada paso del camino de Brecht, con una variación grotesca su propia, cuando explicó acerca de uno de los "disfraces" fue el alquiler de: "Eso es el cojo alegre - víctima de tráfico moderno. Lo llamamos el especial de Nigeria." Soyinka mismo dirigió la "arias" al lado del escenario, a veces luciendo una chaqueta de cuero nuevo, otras cubiertas con túnicas sacerdotales. Esto fue interpretado cómo narcisismo por alguien, especialmente por lo que respecta a los azotes del mendigo Profesor en su primera aparición, pero en realidad se trataba de una parodia irónica de la técnica de la alienación brechtiana.

Aunque las canciones de Soyinka eran lo suficientemente entretenidas en el rendimiento, las letras de Brecht, sin embargo, parecen alegres cuando se comparan con la furia detrás de Soyinka.

No parecía haber ninguna zona de la vida pública de Nigeria sin tocar, pero, afortunadamente, el alivio de la risa a su costa fue proporcionada a las payasadas Napoleónicas por "Boky" - una plaga peor que cualquier realidad nigeriana, sin embargo sombría. La explotación de Soyinka, cómo la nota del programa lo pone, "el paso oportuno de Bokassa hacia atrás en la prehistoria" resultó ser un sustituto ingeniosamente divertido para la atmosfera del Jubileo Victoriano en la obra de Brecht.

Boky estaba en su momento más escandaloso cuando espetó a su matón de escuadrones con palabras de aliento como: "Soy un igualitario. Si no fuera un igualitario no estaría entre vosotros, heces, canalla, residuo de bidé!". También acusa a la "madre patria": "Nuestra patria, no contento con ser la cuna de la revolución, es también la cuna de la cultura. Si usted no es francés."

Dentro de la parte inferior de sensibilidad artística de Soyinka y su activismo político hay una preocupación profunda sobre el lugar de la violencia en los asuntos humanos, y también en el proceso de la naturaleza. La violencia en esta concepción productiva y destructiva, tanto potencialmente reaccionaria y revolucionaria, en función de los asuntos de las circunstancias, intereses y voluntad. Los delincuentes aparecen frecuentemente en su obra y en algunas ocasiones, como en *The Trials of Brother Jero*, no hay casi una glorificación del criminal, ya que es visto como el medio

por lo cual la corrupción ocultada de una persona socialmente respetable se trajo justificadamente, en muy grande alivio.

Cuestiones políticas específicas incluyen principalmente: la corrupción de los nigerianos poscoloniales, la visión para una nueva África, la capacidad de forjar una nueva identidad libre de la influencia del imperialismo europeo; el nacionalismo, la democracia, la injusticia, la corrupción, la falta de identidad y orientación política propia del país, la falta de autoridad del Estado, la dictadura de los líderes tradicionales y modernos, la transición política confundida, la alternancia política confundida, el poder absoluto de una república a una "monarquía absoluta", la redefinición de las relaciones Norte-Sur, la instrumentalización de los intelectuales. Los temas sociales específicos enmarcados por Wole Soyinka son: la superstición en el lugar de la razón, la juventud; el pueblo y la ciudad, las mejores relaciones entre cristianos y musulmanes, género, el desempleo, la hospitalidad africana, el sacrificio, la poligamia, el trabajo duro, la igualdad de las razas, la pobreza, los crímenes y castigos, los crímenes y la impunidad, etc. El tema cultural específico es la revalidación de la cultura. En cuanto a los temas ambientales específicos, se incluyen: la deforestación, la contaminación del aire, los incendios forestales, la agricultura y la inestabilidad climática, las inundaciones. Las cuestiones lingüísticas específicas incluyen la alienación lingüística y el multilingüismo. Los problemas socioeconómicos específicos son: la red de carreteras, su débil tecnología trafica causando accidentes de tráfico y la muerte en lugar de efectos positivos como la reducción de la distancia entre las personas, los mercados, los servicios y el conocimiento, el desarrollo socioeconómico y el crecimiento económico de una nación. El problema religioso específico es la hipocresía religiosa. Las cuestiones morales específicas que cuestan reconocer, reconocer y aceptar las malas acciones de uno, el yo y el otro: la cooperación en el lugar de confiar, falsificación de licencia, el principio de la condición de la supervivencia del más apto.

Además de las cuestiones mencionadas y enmarcadas por Wole Soyinka en sus obras dramáticas, hay un cierto número de cuestiones que el autor ha replanteado en sus obras. Ellos son: la colonización, la esclavitud, las guerras, el pasado africano sin gloria, etc.

Los conceptos "características estéticas" y "marco, enmarcar temas" son sinónimos porque que tanto el significado de las formas y maneras y formas a través

de cuales los acontecimientos de la vida real se representan por medio de herramientas literarias, crean en los lectores una percepción de la vida cotidiana en las artes en general, y en las obras literarias en particular. Los temas centrales enmarcados por Wole Soyinka en sus obras se pueden enumerar de la siguiente manera: el conflicto entre el pasado y el presente en el contexto de tiempo y lugar de la post independencia de Nigeria; la naturaleza de la familia africana que incluyen la hospitalidad, la superstición, la creencia tradicional, el conflicto de valores urbanos y rurales; el sacrificio; la corrupción política y la corrupción de los líderes religiosos, la corrupción de la cultura africana; la dictadura de los líderes tradicionales y modernos; la hipocresía religiosa.

Para comenzar con el "canto de bienvenida", no se canta, sino que es recitado por Dirge-Man en *A Dance of the Forests*. Esta canción expone el pasado sin gloria de África para que se pueda examinar como una manera de evitar el ciclo de la estupidez, y vislumbrar un futuro mejor. Las "canciones de nostalgia e ira" o "canciones de dolor" en la cultura afroamericana son literalmente canciones de las almas de la gente negra. Estas canciones sirvieron como un detonante para la libre expresión dentro de la población esclavizada. No había educación para los esclavos y esto supuso una forma clave para poder expresarse. Estas canciones comienzan con desesperación pero, al final vence la esperanza. Este es un símbolo de la vida de los esclavos. Las canciones fueron utilizadas para describir su sufrimiento y la esperanza que finalmente albergaban.

La siguiente categoría es la "canción de protesta". La ilustración es en *The Lion and the Jewel*. Es la reacción de Sidi a las palabras de Baroka. La idea sigue siendo la mentira de Baroka en su impotencia. Pero Sidi está dudando, y está muy lejos de creer en él. Sidi repite esta canción de protesta a Baroka. Además, esta canción también suena cómo una canción de burla porque sólo en este nivel de la acción, Baroka está calificado como el hombre derrotado, alimentando. a a la esquina de la habitación y levanta a cabo al 'ako' banco.

Por otra parte, la "canción nupcial" muestra la sensibilidad romántica de Sidi y su sueño por una vida matrimonial. Además, esta canción destaca sus emociones, especialmente la felicidad. Ella no siente pena por la seducción y se prepara para su boda. Para ella, Baroka es la mejor propuesta. En cuanto a las "canciones para celebrar matrimonios", la idea esencial es que, todas son sobre el matrimonio y la infancia, por

lo cual Sidi canta la alabanza. La particularidad de estas dos canciones es que son en yoruba, y sólo el pueblo yoruba canta la unión del león y la joya.

La siguiente categoría es la de las “canciones de alabanza”. Se definen como una de las formas poéticas más utilizadas en África; la canción de alabanza no es parte de la cultura occidental, aunque el "elogio" es una forma similar. En las obras de teatro como *The Road*, *The Lion and the Jewel* y *Kongi's Harvest* el uso de las canciones de alabanza es relevante.

Para empezar, en *The Road* la canción de alabanza está en la segunda parte de la obra. La acción de la obra, que es el contexto de esta canción muestra personajes como Sansón, Particulares Joe, Kotonu, SayTokyoKid y Profesor. Están hablando de la muerte por accidente de tráfico como una forma para ellos de obtener todo lo que necesitan para vivir. Además, los accidentes de tráfico, el número de víctimas y cómo se destruyen sus cuerpos es cómo en tiempo de guerra. Por eso Profesor afirma que es “como un campo de batalla que siempre dicen. Al igual que un campo de batalla”. En relación con esto, Kotonu, el conductor dice: "Mucho más tranquilo hacer el comercio de la muerte que de ser testigo de ella." Particular Joe llama a Sansón, “el distribuidor sangrienta en la muerte”, y le pregunta dónde estaba el día del festival de pilotos. Muy sorprendentemente, Samson contesta, ‘... Profesor. Él se encarga de todo para nosotros’. Esto lleva a Profesor a pedir a todos que "Diga[n] en voz alta el himno. Cualquier canción hará sino para restaurar mi confianza en sí mismo que sea un canto de alabanza. Pero importa que no me moleste. Siento que trabajar."

En *The Lion and the Jewel*, Baroka estalla en una gran canción de auto-elogio cuando se entera por de Sadiku que Sidi piensa que él es demasiado viejo para casarse con ella. En la canción de auto-elogio por Baroka, las ideas esenciales son: sólo él tiene tal poder entre los leones, la edad no disminuye su virilidad, es capaz de seducir y ganar a cualquier mujer hermosa o niña, sea cual sea el medio que utiliza, la más fuerte de sus esposas queda exhausta antes de que empiece, por lo que será una oportunidad para la más joven y bella de aprender más. El otro aspecto que este análisis menciona es la repetición de “Didnot”, que también se convierte en “Do not I” para expresar la idea de la auto-alabanza, la capacidad, la posibilidad, él hizo y sigue haciendo lo que otros no pudieron.

Las "canciones de conflicto político" son una nueva categoría. Se utilizan en la *Kongi's Harvest*. Danlola presenta su renuncia a su pérdida de poder a través de una canción de conflicto político.

En cuanto a "canciones del paso de la vida a la muerte", están sólo en *The Road*. Esto es evidente, porque esta obra es sobre el ritual de "Agemo" que la propia obra define simplemente cómo un culto religioso de la disolución de la carne. La lectura de esta canción muestra otro aspecto que está vinculado al paso de la vida humana a la muerte; es la disolución de la carne al que Profesor se determina negativamente a conocer la realidad a través de su búsqueda de la Palabra. Lo más importante en esta canción es que, la búsqueda de la esencia de la muerte por el hombre es la única manera de explicar el significado de la vida. Además, denuncia el hecho de que los dioses salvajes son maestros de la vida humana. La obra trata de la carretera y los accidentes que se producen en el desconocimiento total de los viajeros cuyas vidas se transforman en muerte. Este análisis evoca una especie de incertidumbre acerca de la posibilidad de llegar al destino. Las primeras personas afectadas por esta situación son los personajes de la obra. Ellos son se hallan en el camino, ya que son vendedores, conductores, matones, propietarios de camiones, etc. Además, el conductor en la carretera parece condenado a sí mismo; él es consciente de la imposibilidad de evitar que su vida se transforme en muerte. Frente a esta situación, el camino que lleva al Cielo es largo. El conductor le pide al Creador que no sea duro con él, porque el camino al Cielo es realmente largo. Esta canción muestra el secreto de la experiencia de la transición de la vida a la muerte, y los sentimientos acerca de la existencia.

La "canción de guerra" cantada por los matones tiene como preocupación principal la experiencia de conocer al Dios Oro durante un accidente de carretera. Esta situación no es diferente de la experiencia real en tiempos de guerra, porque nadie sobrevive después de que se reúnan el dios Oro y los espíritus ancestrales que se alimentaban de sangre humana.

TEATRALIDAD: PROVERBIOS Y RENDIMIENTO.

La teatralidad podría ser la especificidad del lenguaje teatral. Se distingue el teatro de otros géneros literarios, otros tipos de espectáculo como la danza, el rendimiento o el arte multimedia. Las formas de la ficción narrativa que el actor usa

en el escenario pueden incluir personajes fantásticos, acróbatas, marionetas mecanizadas, monólogos, diálogos, representaciones, etc. La oralidad es un elemento importante en el teatro porque trata de la lengua en su forma hablada sobre el escenario. Una comprensión de las obras de teatro puede ser posible a través de la lectura de los proverbios que contienen ricas indicaciones así como a los textos en los que se utilizan. Las obras de teatro se escriben para ser representadas. Por otra parte, la representación teatral como texto dramático merece un estudio. Los proverbios –que son utilizados por Wole Soyinka en sus obras– realmente funcionan como una de las lenguas del teatro. Además, la música, la canción la danza, las acciones del cuerpo, el silencio, la luz, etc., son también partes del lenguaje del teatro. En este sentido, todos ellos pueden ser solamente entendidos y representados correctamente a través del teatro. El rendimiento de los proverbios muestra la plenitud y la importancia del género dramático.

En esta sección se ofrece un marco, la descripción de las creencias culturales yorubas, si no de África y del mundo, a través de los proverbios. El uso de proverbios por Wole Soyinka es una herramienta discursiva en sus obras. Los proverbios son elementos de la literatura oral utilizados por los escritores africanos para reeducar a los europeos acerca de la estética de la literatura africana tradicional invocada antes de la invasión europea de África. Los proverbios son en realidad una de las formas de la literatura oral que sirven como antecedentes de la ficción moderna en prosa. Estas formas narrativas orales tradicionales ejercieron su influencia sobre los escritores nigerianos en su intento de representar su propia experiencia africana a través de la novela, la poesía y el teatro. Los proverbios como formas narrativas orales tradicionales son dichos sabios que abordan el corazón del discurso en un contexto dado con verdad y objetividad. Wole Soyinka está visiblemente influenciado por las tradiciones orales africanas. Al igual que otros escritores africanos, Soyinka toma las ricas formas de arte verbal africano para crear nuevas visiones de la vida y nuevos lenguajes dramáticos y poéticos con notable originalidad. Estos préstamos se dan en la forma de uso imaginativo de símbolos tradicionales africanos, imágenes, mitos, proverbios y otros recursos estilísticos tradicionales. En África y en las culturas de Nigeria especialmente, los proverbios sirven fielmente la tarea de portar significados a sus destinos o a los corazones de los oyentes.

Bernth Lindfors escribe que los yoruba tienen un dicho que reza: “proverbios son los caballos del discurso; si se pierde la comunicación, utilizamos proverbios para encontrarlo”. Por supuesto, los yoruba, como cualquier otro pueblo, tienen un repertorio de proverbios, y los usamos para servir a una variedad de propósitos retóricos. Los proverbios se emplean no sólo para recuperar la comunicación, sino también para acelerarla, ralentizarla, transmitir mensajes de peso, hacer bromas, matizar argumentos, mitigar la crítica contundente, aclarar ideas difíciles y para disfrazar facilitar la comprensión de lo que pueda resultar más complejo.

Como marco teórico, el lenguaje es uno de los principales instrumentos por los cuales se transmiten los valores, sistemas de creencias y prácticas culturales. Para ello, los escritores nigerianos en inglés tienen que desplegar teorías de sentido a su prestación de proverbios yoruba en inglés y tienen que depender de esto para conseguir comunicar su significado.

Los proverbios seleccionados abordan los siguientes temas y subtemas: el pasado, presente y futuro; el conflicto de valores; el rechazo de la técnica moderna; el poder y la riqueza; la cosmovisión eurocéntrica; la cosmovisión afrocéntrica; la mediación de los conflictos; y la hipocresía religiosa.

Los siguientes proverbios muestran el tema de la temporalidad. Para empezar, el proverbio (1) que es "Proverbio de los huesos y el silencio", "Proverbio a la vida y el silencio", estas declaraciones no son realmente proverbios como los demás que enumeramos en este estudio. Todos ellos abordan el tema del conflicto entre el pasado, el presente y el futuro. Este estudio va a revelar cómo estas dos declaraciones muestran la relación entre los tres tiempos. De hecho, “Proverbios a los huesos y el silencio” y “Oracle para la vida y el silencio” son etiquetas, frases citadas: etiquetas latinas. La evocación de la etiqueta latina tiene en cuenta el hecho de que las reglas latinas ayudan a mantener la cultura del elitismo. Wole Soyinka a través del personaje de Agboreko, y especialmente en sus "Proverbios a los huesos y el silencio" y "Oracle para la vida y el silencio", que también son etiquetas en el modelo de etiquetas latinas, promueven la revalidación del pasado después de su examinación; esto ayuda a destruir todos los males y futilidades. Este paso garantiza la reconstrucción para un mejor presente clamado por las masas. La segunda etiqueta de Agboreko es ‘Oracle a la vida y el silencio’. En esta frase, hay tres palabras importantes: ‘Oracle’, "vida" y "silencio". Están utilizadas en ambas etiquetas para poner el énfasis en esta condición durante la

transición entre el pasado, el presente y el futuro. Estos proverbios funcionan para aclarar nuestra opinión acerca de sus ‘Proverbios de los huesos y el silencio’ y "Oracle para la vida y el silencio" de Agboreko. Es decir, la reunión de las tribus es la ocasión apropiada para que todos los nigerianos se examinen a sí mismos haciendo y respondiendo a preguntas sobre el pasado, el presente y el futuro. La "reunión de las tribus" es en realidad un ‘Oracle’, como Sole Soyinka desea a través de su personaje, Agboreko en su etiqueta ‘Oracle para la vida y el silencio’.

Proverbio (3) es "Ningún hombre sensato puede quemar la casa para cocinar un poco de ñame". Este proverbio aborda la actitud y la responsabilidad de los hombres en el momento de tomar decisiones. Este proverbio significa que las personas no deben resolver un problema menor tomando decisiones que harán mucho más daño. Tal proverbio expresa una especie de verdad general.

El proverbio (4) dice: "Si la pulga tenía una casa de su propiedad, que no estaría fuera en la espalda de un perro". Este proverbio retrata el deshonor y la falta de dignidad atribuida a la situación de no tener una casa propia, especialmente la consecuencia de ser un parásito, es decir, de vivir sobre o dentro de otro y obtener su alimento de él.

Con el fin de evitar la fragmentación de la acción de la obra en relación con los proverbios (5), (6) y (7), los analizamos todos ellos en una sola sección. Estos proverbios son: (5) "Los labios de los muertos no se abren hasta el momento" (Agboreko, 33), (6) "El camaleón danza, su padre aplaude y exclama, cómo la modestia el joven guarda silencio" (Agboreko, 33) y (7) "Porque llovió el día que el huevo se fraguó el pollo tonta juró que era un pez" (Agboreko, 33). Estos tres proverbios expresan la misma idea, es decir: la invitación inesperada de Dead Man y Dead Woman a la celebración de la Reunión de las Tribus. También los leemos en la misma página. La presencia de la pareja de los muertos era sinónimo de la confrontación y el juicio en vista de Agboreko, viejo y el resto de personajes que viven.

El proverbio (6) "El camaleón baila, su padre aplaude y exclama como modestia el joven guarda silencio" es un proverbio legendario porque nos pide utilizar nuestro ingenio, y suena como un cuento corto, no basado en hechos, sobre todo con un animal en ella: el camaleón. En el contexto de la obra, cuando Agboreko dice ‘El camaleón baila, su padre aplaude y exclama como modestia el joven guarda silencio' hace referencia a Dead Man y la Dead Woman. *A Dance of the Forests* parece convertirse

en una danza positiva para el camaleón. Además, un camaleón es un animal pequeño de lengua larga, cuyo color cambia según su entorno. Los colores del camaleón sirven para la supervivencia, no para la belleza; las circunstancias hacen que los camaleones cambien de color. El camaleón mira hacia delante y observa, mira atrás. Esto también significa que, el camaleón tiene un ojo puesto en el futuro y un ojo en el pasado. Estas cualidades atribuidas a un camaleón refuerzan la idea de que cuando Agboreko habla de ello en su proverbio, que quiere decir la pareja de los muertos cuya participación en la celebración de la Reunión de las Tribus es una vergüenza para los personajes de vivos ya que encontraron a quienes les ofendieron. El regreso de Dead Man y Dead Woman desde el mundo de los muertos hasta al mundo de los vivos es también parte de las ideas expresadas en las cualidades del camaleón, el cual cambia sus colores para la supervivencia, y que mira adelante y detrás con un ojo puesto en el pasado y otro en el futuro. Todas estas cualidades son útiles, no sólo por el camaleón, que son Dead Man y Dead Woman, sino también por los personajes vivos.

Tanto Dead Man como Dead Woman ven en la reunión de las tribus una oportunidad para liberarse de sus cargas. Además, cuando este análisis considera las declaraciones de Dead Woman como una metáfora, quiere decir que la pareja de los muertos, a través de su presencia en la reunión de las tribus, se comprometen a poner la primera piedra necesaria para la construcción de la nación esperada por todas las personas.

Por otra parte, los proverbios (8) y (9) también serán analizados en la misma sección. De hecho, el proverbio (8) es "Hasta el último de que la calabaza se ha roto, no hablemos de la sequía", y el (9) es "Si el viento se pierde en la tormenta, es inútil que le enviara un paraguas". El proverbio (8) significa que la gente debe esperar hasta el momento apropiado para hacer o ver lo que quiere. A través del uso de este proverbio, Wole Soyinka expresa el valor de la paciencia, porque el viejo no quiere esperar demasiado tiempo para conocer la cuarta persona que está con su hijo, Demoke, Rola y Adenebi. Old Man tiene temores sobre la cuarta persona, que puede ser Eshouro que busca a Demoke con el fin de castigarlo porque el tallador ha matado a Oremole, siervo de Eshouro.

El proverbio (9) "Si el viento se pierde en la tormenta, es inútil que le enviara un paraguas", que hace hincapié en el problema, y la actitud de la gente a la hora de tomar la solución apropiada. Este proverbio significa que la gente no debe perder su

tiempo tratando de resolver los problemas que no son en realidad verdaderas preocupaciones: el caso del viento, si puede perderse en la tormenta, es inútil que le enviara un paraguas, porque el viento es sólo el aire en movimiento como el resultado de fuerzas naturales, y el paraguas es un aparato plegable con un palo, cubierto con algodón, seda, etc., utilizado para albergar de la lluvia a la persona que lo sostiene. Este proverbio insiste en que la paciencia del viejo hombre debe prevalecer; el tiempo mismo les dirá quién es la cuarta persona.

Las funciones desempeñadas en los proverbios analizados son las mismas en el proverbio (10) "Los ojos que miran hacia abajo, sin duda ven la nariz. La mano que se sumerge hasta el fondo de la olla va a comer la mayor tortuga. En el cielo no crece la hierba pero si la tierra llamó a su estéril, no va a beber más leche. El pie de la serpiente no está partido en dos cómo de un hombre o en cientos como las de ciempiés, pero si Agere podía bailar con paciencia como la serpiente, desenrolla la cadena que lleva a los muertos..."

En el proverbio (10) Agboreko simplemente le dice al Viejo que debe ser paciente; a través del proverbio (10), este análisis refuerza la idea de que Wole Soyinka es el escritor que emplea abundantes dichos yoruba y asociados con gente de su calaña. Además, el proverbio (10) es una acumulación de otros proverbios que ejemplifican la paciencia, y lo difícil que es ser paciente.

El proverbio (2) " Si usted ve la hoja de plátano recién fibrosa como los pechos de una mujer. Si usted ve la hoja de plátano desmenuzada en sí, hilo sobre hilo cuelgue húmeda como el crepé de dolor no digas que es el viento. Deja a los muertos espacio para bailar." Este proverbio es, como el proverbio analizado anteriormente, una declaración que se refiere a relatos o leyendas del mito yoruba. En *A Dance of the Forests*, este proverbio suena como una metáfora, el Dirge-Man dice al encargado de la reunión ritual, errores de los seres humanos que Dead Man y Dead Woman van a descubrir. La imagen de la "hoja de plátano" se refiere a la experiencia atroz que Dead Man y Dead Woman han experimentado en la corte de Mata Kharibu.

Además, el proverbio (11) es " El pajar no está fuera de su alcance cuando los medios de polvo se asiente." El quid de este proverbio es el mensaje de la inevitabilidad. La idea es que el polvo ha alcanzando el pajar. El mensaje moral de la inevitabilidad que ocurre a su debido tiempo se predica indirectamente. Además, este proverbio revela la idea de las estaciones y el fenómeno natural de éstas. Por lo tanto,

la gente no debe intervenir en la prevención de cualquier cosa que suceda en función del tiempo. En el contexto de la obra, Agboreko utiliza este proverbio para decirle al viejo hombre que es imposible para ellos evitar la llegada de la pareja de los muertos a la reunión de las Tribus: la participación de la pareja muerta a la ceremonia es inevitable.

El proverbio (12) por Makuri, "El ciego no tiene prisa por temor, hacía fuera su guía", es una verdad filosófica, empírica y general, que retrata la situación de miedo, y la solución de apresurarse para el ciego. El significado es claro: en tiempo de miedo los ciegos no se apresuran, que hace fuera su guía. El proverbio implica tiempos difíciles, y la buena elección que uno debe hacer para superar las dificultades sin engañar a nadie y no elevar opiniones optimistas en las personas. No hay necesidad de tomar decisiones que no están a punto de resolver una dificultad.

Además, el proverbio (13) es "Cuando la enfermedad ha terminado, comienza la oscuridad". Este proverbio es dicho por Beggar cuando su discusión con Makuri continúa. Este sabio hace hincapié retóricamente en la universalidad de la mala salud: es uno de los fenómenos que dan vueltas. Este proverbio metafórico se puede interpretar más en el sentido de la situación de la esperanza que viene después de que las personas han superado problemas como "la enfermedad", y la fuerza creativa malévola que luego, hace continuamente que las personas que experimenten tal ciclo de sufrimientos como la "oscuridad".

Además, el proverbio (17) es "Las golondrinas encontrarán su nido de nuevo cuando el frío es más". Está dicho por Beggar como una nota de optimismo. Beggares es consciente de su papel en el futuro de la ciénaga. El proverbio (17) es la visión del mendigo sobre el futuro. Después del frío, las van a soltar de nuevo a la vida. En este proverbio, "frío" no debe ser tomado como el buen tiempo; sino como el tiempo duro, los sufrimientos. El mendigo es un ciego, un extranjero en el pantano. Él parece ser el único que había percibido las cosas que motivan el comportamiento de Igwezu, y permanecerá para predicar el deseo del joven para estar libre del efecto inhibitor de perversidades del sacerdote de la serpiente, y de buscar la vida.

Los proverbios por valores culturales incluyen el proverbio (38) "... un anciano es un anciano, y un rey no se convierte en un servil sólo porque él se quite su corona para comer". Las ideas esenciales en el himno de Danlola son que, cada fin deseable cobra su precio. A través de su proverbio, Superintendente reconoce y recuerda el

poder tradicional de Danlola a pesar de su situación de estar en la cárcel. En este nivel de la obra, las circunstancias hacen que Superintendent acepte o rechaze tanto a Kongi como a Danlola. El proverbio (38) ejemplifica la reverencia de ancianos, la realeza, aunque los que manejan el poder están en crisis. Este proverbio se dice en el comienzo mismo de posibles cambios que puedan venir en la situación política de un país.

Los proverbios (39) y (40), que dicen: "Vegetales de un chelín deben apaciguar una especia de medio penique" (Danlola, 62) y "El rey es dios." (Sarumi, 62). El uso de estos proverbios muestra la aceptación por Danlola del sistema moderno de Kongi, y su lucha por presentarse como un sistema creíble, erróneamente desechado y uno que se niega obstinadamente a ser erosionado por las fuerzas formidables y los poderes coercitivos del Estado moderno.

El proverbio (41) es: "¿Qué es un rey sin un clan de ancianos?" (Danlola, 63). Este sabio se refiere a la presencia y el trabajo de los ancianos en su sistema de gobierno tradicional, que es también un reino. Además, este proverbio retrata la importancia de los ancianos para el rey. Esto muestra también una gran consideración y reverencia hacia las personas mayores en la política.

Además, el proverbio (42): "Los vástagos de desnudos de un rey no son un espectáculo para los niños que les cegará", hace referencia a una parte del cuerpo humano, los vástagos, su estado y condición de estar desnuda, con el fin de evocar su sentido de no tener ninguna protección, al no tener medios para defenderse, desprovistos de medios precisos o convenientes de sustento, expuestos, indigentes, etc. Además, este proverbio también exhibe la relación "causa - efecto", ya que habla de los niños. El significado literal es que la parte desnuda del rey entre la rodilla y el tobillo causa ceguera a los niños; la parte secreta del cuerpo humano no se debe mostrar a otras personas, públicamente, y tampoco a los niños. Además, el uso de este proverbio significa: la desgracia del rey tradicional es un peligro para toda la comunidad bajo su gobierno.

El proverbio (43): "manos sabias apartan hasta que él se limpió la parte inferior", también hace referencia a la parte del cuerpo humano, las manos, y su calificación, que son sabias, para expresar la idea de que un hombre consciente que siempre tiene éxito, persevera y se da por vencido sólo cuando alcanza sus objetivos. A través de este proverbio, Danlola está expresando su falta de voluntad de la indigencia. Aunque la cárcel requiere una gran resistencia.

El proverbio (44) dice: "Una corona es una carga cuando el rey visita la habitación de su favorito. Cuando la envoltura del rey cae en audiencia, los sabios saben que él quiere que lo dejen solo". Este proverbio hace referencia a uno de los principios constitucionales en un reino, es decir, la distinción entre el rey como persona y la corona como institución, con un énfasis especial en la corona; la corona como institución es el jefe del poder judicial, y la justicia se administra en nombre del soberano. Él simboliza la estabilidad y durabilidad de las instituciones del reino, y los comandos de la lealtad y la devoción del pueblo. Paradójicamente, en este proverbio, la corona se convierte en una carga, una carga pesada y algo difícil de soportar para Danlola, el rey tradicional. El proverbio, "una corona es una carga" es una metáfora que significa la aceptación lamentable por Danlola de la muerte de su autoridad tradicional. La segunda declaración de este proverbio es un discurso retórico del rey ahora derrotado, Danlola dice a los ancianos que son también miembros de su grupo "que quiere que lo dejen solo".

Además, el proverbio (45): "Sólo un niño tonto pide un postrado al padre para él" hace referencia al parentesco que es la relación por la sangre, y también a la relación familiar, con una consideración especial de dos miembros: el niño y el padre. El proverbio menciona el acto de postración entre ellos. Un niño no debe pedir a su padre que se postre. Además, el proverbio (46) "Si el baobab niega con la cabeza en la ira, ¿qué posibilidades tiene el roedor cuando un pendiente cae" es un proverbio metafórico utilizado para abogar por el Superintendente que pregunta esto porque él ve a sí mismo en una situación peligrosa e incómoda entre Kongi de quién, la desobediencia por Kongi, el verdadero respeto por Danlola le costará su trabajo e su vida.

El proverbio (47): "Un padre emplea sólo un pequeño palo en su hijo, él no llama a la policía que lo llevara a la meta", también es utilizado por Sarumi en cumplimiento de su juicio con su padre Danlola no recurre a la fuerza como medio para corregir errores de Superintendente. Danlola no debe hacer uso de toda su energía para corregir los errores de Superintendente. De lo contrario, esto llevaría a la destrucción de Superintendente. Literalmente este proverbio también puede significar: un padre responsable educa a su hijo sin intermediarios.

Los proverbios (48) –"No libra la ñame del rey en una pequeña maja"– y (49) –"El paraguas del rey no da más sombra"–, dichos, por Sarumi y Drummer respectivamente, abordan el mismo aspecto del conflicto de valor. El proverbio (48) menciona la "ñame

del rey" y "una pequeña maja". No hay oposición entre estas imágenes. El proverbio (49), es: "El paraguas del rey no da más sombra". La idea esencial está en el uso de la imagen del "paraguas". De hecho, Drummer expresa su realidad a partir de ahora: se exponen, se pierde la protección del rey.

El proverbio (50) es: "El hijo descarriado admite sus errores y pide perdón a su padre ". Este proverbio enfatiza retóricamente el proceso lógico y verdadero que conduce al perdón. La verdad reside en el hecho de la voluntad verdadera y real de oír, la buena conciencia motiva al niño díscolo que pide perdón de sus errores, y el verdadero amor motiva al padre que le perdona sus errores. El proverbio (50) cumple las funciones de persuasión política y presión para Danlola después de la dosis suficiente de la persuasión y de presión y durante el festival inminente que trae la nueva ñame a Kongi con sus propias manos, libremente y en presencia del pueblo. En la mente de Kongi, este acto demostrará la práctica de la verdadera democracia del país, y en realidad el ser aceptado por todo el pueblo y para todo el pueblo.

Por otra parte, los proverbios (51): "... si tienes dinero puedes vivir como un rey" y (52): "Si un detenido paga su precio verás a su comodidad" muestran el honor y la dignidad atribuida a la posesión de dinero, y al hacerse muy rico rápida y deshonestamente, especialmente a través de los sobornos. Esto tematiza el hecho de tener dinero cómo una buena condición y manera de vivir de la misma manera que un rey. De este análisis se infiere que si una persona practica la corrupción en la comunidad representada en la obra a través de estos proverbios, la buena fortuna, el honor, la reverencia, la estima, el crédito y todos tipos de privilegios serán suyos. Además, la corrupción y su resultado, que es el hecho de poseer mucho dinero, de forma deshonesta es una condición *sine qua non* para la vida deshonesta de lujo, tales como tener una vida sexual plena con esposas de otras personas, la emisión de permisos de fin de semana, tener siempre una carne decente para su estómago.

Además, el proverbio (53): "...todo sacrificio debe esperar su temporada" ejemplifica el valor de la paciencia que Daodu y Segi deben demostrar en su proceso de oposición a Kongi. Este conduce a la restauración de la dominación tradicional. La experiencia de la paciencia necesaria para Daodu y Segi es también la metodología elegida por Daodu con el fin de tener éxito en su intento de limitar el poder de Kongi.

Por otra parte, los proverbios (55): "El avestruz también tiene plumas pero aún tengo que ver ese pájaro sabio dejar el suelo" y (56): "Cuando un perro se esconde un

hueso ¿no vomita arena?" hacen referencia a dos animales: "el avestruz", en el proverbio, cuando leemos "puntos penachos" y "no sale de la tierra" y "un perro", en el proverbio, cuando se lee "se esconde un hueso" y "¿no vomita arena?". El significado de estos dos proverbios es atribuible a las cualidades de los animales a los que se refieren. En primer lugar, el avestruz es símbolo de orgullo, fertilidad, suerte y sencillez, verdad, felicidad y evitación. Estos son adivinanzas, proverbios utilizados por Danlola en referencia a su determinación de no abandonar su palacio por Kongi.

Además, el proverbio (56) es: "La tortuga y la cáscara están llenas de aire bolsillos". Se hace referencia a otro animal, la tortuga. En este proverbio, vemos cómo "la cáscara" aparece junto a "la tortuga". El sentido del proverbio se encuentra en la unidad de las partes del cuerpo a través de la teoría de causa-efecto de que si las partes de un todo de acuerdo a su naturaleza, se unen, el resultado es la continuidad de su existencia. Este proverbio, también, muestra la relación entre la tortuga y su cáscara en el sentido de que el principio de la vida va más allá. Parece claro que la tortuga debe la vida a su caparazón. En este sentido, la relación entre la tortuga y la cáscara simboliza saber retirarse dentro de uno mismo, para usar las propias fortalezas y protegerse del mundo exterior. En la acción de la obra, el proverbio (56) está utilizado por Danlola para expresar su satisfacción de ver con antelación el producto positivo y el resultado de su determinación de resistir a Kongi en su intento de sustituir a la autoridad tradicional que Danlola representa. Esto también puede significar que Danlola prevé el fracaso de Kongi cuando Danlola le presenta el "New Yam" como una indicación de su abdicación.

Además, tenemos los proverbios (57): "Pajados sabios aprenden a separar arrullo de la paloma de la alarma estridente" y (58): "El cazador más audaz sabe cuándo el arma no debe ser claveteado. Cuando una ardilla busca santuario desde arriba del árbol iroko, el cazador se terminó..." muestran el conocimiento actual que llega a través de la experiencia, con los llamados "pajados sabios", del "arrullo de la paloma" y "de alarma estridente". El sentido de estos proverbios es que Danlola sabe las estrategias de Kongi en su intento de sustituir la autoridad tradicional por su sistema moderno de gobierno, por ello, Danlola utiliza una especie de contra-estrategia para frustrar el plan de Kongi. Además, Danlola y Sarumi, a través del uso de estos proverbios, expresan sus fuertes sentimientos sobre la caída de la ambición de Kongi.

Además, el proverbio (59): "... una vida humana una vez enterrada no puede, como (...) el ñame, brotar de nuevo" citado por Daodu refuerza la convicción de caída de Kongi. De hecho, este proverbio hace referencia a la condición humana en oposición al concepto de la dialéctica. Al respecto, el proverbio hace uso del principio de la negación de la negación de la vida humana una vez enterrado. Este proverbio muestra también la noción del tiempo y de los acontecimientos en consecuencia. Se refiere al presente, y aborda el futuro cercano como el período de la existencia humana que debe ser salvado de los errores, equivocaciones y futilidades del presente que se convierte en el pasado. En el contexto de la obra, este proverbio está utilizado por Daodu como expresión de su confianza en un futuro glorioso, con el liderazgo que debe ser llevado a cabo por un joven responsable. El tiempo de Kongi está pasando.

Por otra parte, los proverbios (60): "Un buen soldado espera órdenes de arranque" y (61): "Cuando un hombre no puede llamar brevemente a casa a decirle adiós a su tierra natal, a continuación, la esperanza sigue siendo su último lujo" se utilizan por el Secretario en su discurso a Dende en la parte de apertura, "Hangover". El sentido de estos proverbios es la culpa, la llamada al orden ocasionado por la falta de disciplina, y de respeto en el modo de controlador.

Además, el proverbio (62) es: " Si te diriges en esa dirección, entonces ese camino conduce a la frontera". Este proverbio subraya el concepto de la propia responsabilidad individual para aprobar o rechazar la tramitación de los asuntos en cualquier nivel de la vida humana. Esto también puede significar que un individuo tiene el deber de siempre verse a sí mismo en la encrucijada de la vida, y podría notarse a sí mismo diciendo que va a la izquierda, derecha o recto. En otras palabras, debe saber si se dirige en una dirección correcta o incorrecta. Uno debería participar completamente en la apreciación de la dirección en la que va. En caso de que él se dirigiese en una dirección equivocada, debe conocerse a sí mismo, y girar para seguir la dirección opuesta y derecha, que es la correcta.

El proverbio (14) versa sobre la superstición, el poder y la riqueza: "Cada dios sacude un mendigo de la mano", que significa que las personas son fieles a su dios, que no pueden rechazar el mendigo que es amado por todos los dioses.

Por otra parte, los problemas de la riqueza y el poder también se describen en otro proverbio. Esto se ve en el proverbio (16): "Todas las mujeres son mucho sangrienta." (Makuri, 105). El significado literario de este proverbio tiene en cuenta la fisiología

de todo el cuerpo de las mujeres, lo que implica una serie de cambios físicos y emocionales en la vida de las mujeres, síntomas poco frecuentes que nunca deben ser ignorados, y uno de ellos es la intensa sed. Este hecho se asocia con la salud de la mujer. El adjetivo "sangrienta" en el proverbio da otro significado al sabio bajo análisis. Ayuda a pasar la situación desde el nivel fisiológico a la naturaleza de las mujeres, es decir son todas iguales; las mujeres son todas las mismas. Están siempre insatisfechas. Aunque los hombres hagan cosas por ellas, terminan yéndose con otros hombres. Este proverbio es el resultado de la experiencia de la anciana. En este respecto, los hombres lo consideran como una verdad general. Las ancianas saben más que las jóvenes. De esta experiencia de una mujer vieja y sabia, la gente se pregunta si el hecho de que las mujeres tengan una sangrienta sed todo tiempo y en todos los lugares es normal.

Wole Soyinka utiliza los proverbios para la cosmovisión eurocéntrica en *The Lion and the Jewel*. El proverbio (18): "La caridad empieza en casa" afirma el principio de la administración en el contexto de la familia, el país y el continente. La información no sugirió implícitamente solo como función social, sino también como función política. Este proverbio expresa las demandas primordiales de cuidar a la familia de uno antes de cuidar a otros. Toda persona debe tener cuidado de su familia y de otras personas que vivan cerca de él antes de ayudar a las personas que viven más lejos o en otro país o continente.

El proverbio (19) dice: "Un profeta no tiene honra sino en su propia casa" y significa que aquellas personas que no te conocen te van a tratar con respeto, mientras que los que te conocen te van a tratar con desprecio. El proverbio (20) dice que "La vergüenza sólo pertenece a los ignorantes" y transmite la idea de burla hacia alguien.

El proverbio (22): "que tomare la mujer y los dos serán como una sola carne" no es en realidad un proverbio; es un versículo de *La Biblia* que, como muchos otros, ofrecen una orientación para parejas, maridos, esposas, novios y comprometidos. Este versículo bíblico en realidad funciona como un proverbio debido a la atmósfera de comedia que prevalece en el contexto de su uso. Lakunle utiliza estas palabras para decirle a Sidi que quiere casarse con ella, en conformidad con los principios bíblicos.

Por último, el proverbio (24): "Ocupate de tus asuntos" es utilizado por Lakunle para contar a Sadiku que ella no debe ocuparse de lo que no le concierne.

Los proverbios para la cosmovisión afrocéntrica son el proverbio (23): "Cuando la masculinidad debe, no puede" se refiere al pensar acerca de los hombres y los aspectos problemáticos de su comportamiento y la identidad masculina. El mensaje esencial de este proverbio es la pérdida de la potencia, la virilidad cuando todavía se necesita. El proverbio (25) dice: "La mujer se pierde en el bosque un día y cada deidad madera muere la próxima" transmite el mensaje de optimismo del hombre para ganar a cualquier mujer que realmente ama.

El proverbio (27) lee: "Cuando el niño está lleno de enigmas, la madre tiene un solo recipiente de agua al menos" transmite indirectamente el mensaje de la posibilidad de que cualquier hombre puede cambiar sus viejas mujeres por otra más joven si sabe conseguirla.

El proverbio (28) "¿Quién sabe? Hasta las uñas de los dedos ha raspado el polvo, nadie puede decir que los insectos han lanzado sus entrañas" es una filosofía, la verdad empírica que muestra la obligación y la necesidad de que los hombres den todos los pasos que conducen al logro, a la realización de cualquier proceso, procedimiento, etc., para que el éxito y la victoria sean suyos sin ninguna otra condición.

El siguiente proverbio (30), dice que "¿La vaca arbusto entra en un agujero cuando escucha sus batidores 'Hei-ei-que-rah!'" Es otra verdad filosófica empírica del proverbio interrogativo en cuestión, que por desgracia termina con una marca de exclamación. Aborda la relación entre una vaca y sus cazadores, con una especial atención a la actitud de la vaca arbusto, que reacciona cuando oye voces de los cazadores. El mensaje importante de este proverbio es que, cuando hombre realmente se enamora de una mujer hermosa, la joven no puede renunciar y abandonar antes de haber ganado porque la ambición de otros hombres es también ganar a la misma mujer.

El proverbio (31): "El zorro se dice que es sabio tan astuto que acecha y cena en pollos nacidos nuevos" es también una estrategia comunicativa indirecta. Este proverbio expresa un acuerdo general donde el zorro es aconsejable que no se pierda ninguna presa nueva y agradable.

El siguiente proverbio (32) "... vamos a empezar por cortar sellos para nuestro propio pueblo solo" tiene el mismo significado que "la caridad comienza en casa". A través de estas palabras, la gente promete que sus inicios, por supuesto, sean modestos.

Además proverbio (33), "Yo no odio a los avances, sólo su naturaleza, que hace que todos los techos y las caras tengan el mismo aspecto. Y deseo de un hombre de

edad es que aquí y no allí" no es en realidad un proverbio como ya descritos. Es parte de la propia experiencia de la vida de Baroka, su propia apreciación y juicio de valor acerca de la relación entre la modernidad y la tradición.

El proverbio (36) dice: "El vino de ayer solo es fuerte y sangre, niño, y aunque el libro cristiano niega la verdad de esto, el vino viejo se desarrolla mejor en un nuevo frasco. La aspereza se suavizó hacia abajo, y el vino robusto adquiere un cuerpo lleno y redondo... ¿No es así – mi niña?". Estos proverbios acumulados tienen en cuenta las situaciones que forman parte del clímax y la resolución de toda la obra. Sidi consiente, acepta a Baroka. Todos los proverbios acumulados por Baroka allanan el camino a la realización del acto sexual. Se empujan para disipar la atmósfera de duda, la resistencia, el rechazo, etc. de Sidi durante este tiempo.

Los proverbios para la mediación de la conflictividad son el (21): " Si el caracol encuentra astillas en su caparazón, cambia de casa" transmite el mensaje de mostrar la empatía y la capacidad de los dos partidos en oposición para hacer algo por sí mismos que gratifica a ambos. Entonces el proverbio (26): " Si la tortuga no puede caer no significa que él puede soportar" transmite el mensaje de que no hay una víctima mortal en toda situación; hay soluciones para todas las situaciones. El último es el proverbio (29) que afirma: "Dicen que usa bien sus perros y caballos" y hace referencia a la técnica que funciona con éxito en la mediación de conflictos de una manera neutral. Esto también evita que alguien entre en conflicto con otras personas. El proverbio sobre la hipocresía religiosa es el número (63): "Hay huevos y hay huevos" significa que los líderes religiosos son todos hipócritas, que son todos iguales.

ABSTRACT IN ENGLISH

This doctoral dissertation examines the constellations of textual features, the markers of Wole Soyinka's literary identity which are identified only through aesthetic sensibility and judgement. The aim is of course, to identify and to locate these aesthetic features, and reveal their exact values and functions in his selected plays. As clear as it may appear, this study aims at getting Wole Soyinka's aesthetic features widely known since they are useful for calling both, leaders, be them traditional or modern, and ordinary peoples to give their countries and continents the chances they deserve in the domains of politics, society, culture, education, economics, environment, religion, etc. Wole Soyinka's plays that constitute the corpus of this dissertation are: *A Dance of the Forests*, *The Swamp Dwellers*, *The Strong Breed*, *The Road*, *The Lion and the Jewel*, *Kongi's Harvest*, and *The Trials of Brother Jero*. These seven plays have been selected mainly because, through their aesthetics and their functions, they are likely linked by their concern with spiritual and the social, with belief and spiritual as integrating forces for social cohesion. They also trace the ironic development and consequences of progress.

The term 'aesthetics' should by derivation mean the inquiry into the nature of sense – perception. Aesthetics addresses freely all the aspects of human life. Aesthetics is a very ambiguous term nowadays, mainly due to the amount of criticism. Soyinka builds its theory of drama with material from his Yoruba tradition: rituals, rites, ceremonies, festivals, etc. This fact justifies in his plays, the use of metanarratives that imaginatively and discursively legitimated movement of the twentieth century, which do not feature in his works in their conventional and familiar configurations. There is no conventional theatre in Yoruba tradition. The dramatic re – enactments of historical events, which often form part of religious festivals, involve acting but they are not meant as entertainment, nor have they produced a professional class of actors. In Africa, there are no clearly set criteria for drama so as to have a conventional theatre. What is true for the Yoruba community is also true for other African communities.

In the development of modern African drama, the survival of some features of traditional African drama will be early noticed. This fact however does not prevent this literary genre in general from meeting the universal criteria of drama. Martin Esslin states that, of focus, of viewpoint, to submit them like organisms in a laboratory, to a survival test in vacuo by seeing how they appear to someone who, in the course of this professional work has to read an endless succession of plays from totally

different backgrounds and who will therefore, almost automatically, apply to them the same general yardstick; who will judge them not as African plays but as plays pure and simple.

Aesthetics can also be defined as the formal study of art especially relating to the enjoyment or study of beauty. Aesthetics is concerned with the beauty, arts, and the understanding of beautiful things. Here again, the seven plays have been selected mainly because the present topic is thoroughly discussed in them. They raise the issue of aesthetics which addresses all aspects of human life. To this effect aesthetics is associated with aesthetic frames and dramatic forms: politics and aesthetics, social and political issues, formal variations; theatricality: the plot, dramatic structures and effects, dance, music, mime, songs and body actions; language variations, intertextual variations, proverbs and performance. The heading mentioned above correspond to the division of this dissertation into four chapters.

The first chapter explores aesthetic frames, dramatic forms and influence of European political theatre on Wole Soyinka's. Through this study it comes to light that aesthetic frames and dramatic forms integrate the essence or nature of literature as an art, that is to say, the creation and re-creation of meaning, true meaning or reality from the process of observation and imagination. Dramatic forms are synonymous with aesthetic categories. In this regards, dramatic forms or aesthetic categories refer to the different literary subgenres the writers use to frame their meaning. Dramatic forms include the following traditional aesthetic categories: comedy, tragedy, satire, lyric, epic, dramatic, etc. In addition, the influence of European theatre on Wole Soyinka is tremendous. His plays reveal traces and indications of European writers who uses drama, poetry, novel, in short, literature as a means to make revolutions. Georgi Dimitrov referred to Georg Lukács's 'Realism in the Balance' and mentioned that, in its day the revolutionary bourgeoisie conducted a violent struggle in the interests of its own class; it made use of every means at its disposal, including those of imaginative literature. The name Caliban in *The Tempest* by William Shakespeare might be a verbal allusion of the word 'canibal' which is equal in meaning with cannibalism. Soyinka writes, 'unborn generations will be cannibals' (p. 49), 'men always eating up one another' (p. 50) in *A Dance of the Forests*, 'we are so hungry that when silly girls like you turn up, we eat them' (p. 137) in *The Strong Breed*, 'you cannot pretend to be an out-and out cannibal like Sergeant Burma' (p. 165) in *The Road*, 'you have

picked yourself a right cannibal of the female species'' (p. 104) in *Kongi's Harvest*. In addition, Shakespeare's opening phrase of a dialogue in *Hamlet*, that is ''to be or not to be'' might have inspired Wole Soyinka when he phrases his ''cry or no cry'' in *The Strong Breed* (p. 137). *The Tempest* is interpreted as a play about colonialism because Prospero comes to Sycorax's island, subdues her, rules the land and imposes his own culture on the people of the land. As for Brecht, he wrote *Drums in the Night*, a play that dealt with the disillusionment after World War I and the German revolution. The returning soldier in the play, Kragler, turned his back on the German revolution after the war in favor of going to bed with his girlfriend. This might have inspired Wole Soyinka to frame the story of Warrior refusal to fight the king's unjust war in *A Dance of the Forests*.

Specific political issues would mainly include: incensed politicians at post-colonial Nigerian politics as aimless and corrupt, vision for a new Africa, one that is able to forge a new identity free from the influence of European imperialism; nationalism, democracy, injustice, corruption, lack of own country's political identity and orientations, lack of authority of state, dictatorship of traditional and modern leaders, confusing political transition and alternance, absolute power from a republic back to an 'absolute monarchy', redefinition of North-South relations, instrumentalisation of highest intellectuals. Specific social issues framed by Wole Soyinka would also cover: superstitions instead of reason, the youth; the village and the town, the better relationships between Christians and Muslim; gender, unemployment, African hospitality, sacrifice, polygamy, hard works, equality of races, poverty, crimes and punishment, crimes and impunity, etc. Specific cultural issues include: revalidation of culture. The specific environmental issues include: deforestation, pollution, wildfire, agriculture and climatic instability, flood. Specific linguistic issues include linguistic alienation, multilingualism. Specific socio-economic issues are: road network, its weak traffic technology causing road accidents and death instead of positive effects such as reducing the distance between people, markets, services and knowledge, the socio-economic development and subsequent economic growth of a nation. The specific religious issue is: religious hypocrisy. Specific moral issues are refusal to acknowledge, recognize and accept one's wrongdoings, the self and the other: cooperation instead of rely, forgery of driving licence, the principle of the survival of the fittest.

In addition to the above framed issues by Wole Soyinka in his dramatic works, there other issues: colonization, slavery, wars, unglorious African past, etc.

The second chapter examines language and intertextual variations. Some of those Soyinka's plays are multilingual, that is to say they exploit a variety of language levels for dramatic effects. They include: American colloquial English, simplified and Nigerian Pidgin English. The plays stand also on the use of informal and formal speeches as well as speeches in Standard English, and speeches in Yoruba language. Code switching and code mixing are also part of linguistic modes in the plays. American colloquial English emphasises Say Tokyo Kid's individual stylistic creativity, and say that the belief and the promotion of the African cultural identity is not the exclusivity of the intellectuals alone. The use of simplified and Nigerian pidgin fulfils the function of a better understanding and knowledge problems when characters who are in the same situation talk in order to improve their life, and to establish satire, resistance, balance, equality, freedom, welfare for all people. Pidgin English phrases also convey a satirical message of the vices and follies of the contemporary Nigeria society through religious institution.

As for the intertextual variations, they include citations, allusions, and references. Citations are presented into three forms: citations between inverted comas, citations in italics and citations isolated from the main texts. The technique of citing one's own words fulfils the function of emphasis. In addition, reading through this citation and the causes that make the character pronounces it, concerns the relationship between a slave and his master, an apprentice and his master, an old uncharismatic political leader and a young charismatic leader. This shows that talented inferior persons are always subjects to jealousy, hate, discrimination, elimination, etc. This fact affects the practice of democracy as people do not consider themselves in terms of qualities, talents, ideas, etc. A few common categories of allusion follow: nominal allusions, literary allusions, verbal allusions, mythological allusions, religious allusions and historical allusions. Names of festivals, rituals and rites are implicitly used in the plays. The playwright also inserts in his plays names of places that refer to geographical environments, and the four cardinal points. The title of a sound and well known book: "Shorter Companion Dictionary" is mentioned in *The Lion and the Jewel* (p. 6) to determine the level of education, the educational status of the Lakunle. There are also names that refer implicitly to the religious system and domain. In the play, Wole Soyinka uses

the name “Nazi salute” shows the situation of Kongi who maintains total control over all the instruments of coercion; “Field Marshal” (p. 119). In addition, “Five-Year Development Plan” (pp. 76, 94, 129) a program that Kongi and his followers develop when he takes them to retreat in the mountains so that the New Yam Festival becomes an integrate part this plan, and bases it on harmony, but also to exercise dominance and control, and Kongi’s followers seeks to mould their image by adopting the ‘remote and impersonal’ image of the elders.

The examples of verbal allusions with moving and modification of letters in Wole Soyinka’s selected plays are: “AKSIDENT STORE – ALL PART AVAILEBUL” (p. 149) in *The Road*. This verbal allusion fulfil the function of emphasis so that it draws the people’s attention.

The use Yoruba mythology in Soyinka’s postcolonial dramatic works fulfils the function of resistance and counter-discourse against the dominant colonialist discursive system. In addition, Soyinka’s mythological allusions serve the quest for moral regeneration and reinforcement. He uses Yoruba mythology to awaken black consciousness regarding their changing society under Western culture’s influence and to help Africans renew with their cultural values.

The terms ‘Mali. Chaka- Songhai – Glory- Empires’ (p. 11), “Mali - Songhai. Lisabi - Chaka”, are used in *A Dance of the Forests* as an historical allusion to the glory of the African past which cannot be subjected to any doubt. However, the true and significant history of these medieval kingdoms of West Africa collapsed and fell despite their greatness. Furthermore, the common noun ‘slave’ and the character’s name ‘Slave Dealer’ are historical allusions to slavery, that is also the slave trade that African leaders accepted and are still blindly accepting. The next historical allusion is ‘Saro women’. Wole Soyinka alludes to them to look at women’s participation in trade, agriculture, women’s political roles in chiefship, other leadership positions, and nationalist movements; and the current constraints under which women function. Then, ‘Nazi salut’ and ‘Field Marshal’ from Wole Soyinka’s *Kongi’s Harvest* are historical allusions to dictatorship regime in Africa.

As for biblical allusions, Demoke’s murder of Oremole is a notable example. This murder from *A Dance of the Forests* is an indirect reference to the story of Cain and Abel in *The Bible*. This biblical story is also about murder, caused by jealousy. The literary ideas conveyed in both stories are concerned, they can be summarized on

the danger of harboring hatred, and violence. Though, it is inevitable for brethren to get crossed with one another. The wise way to deal with such problems and situations is to go and tell the brother his fault between oneself and him alone. The danger of harboring hatred is that, sometimes the poison becomes so strong that it will divide brethren one from another.

In *The Strong Breed* the central conflict is the transfer of sins and guilt into the innocent person. Like Christ, Eman stresses the place of the will in cleansing rites when he offers to stand in for Ifada, the scapegoat-carrier. The name of Eman, suggests Christ, who is also called Emmanuel, God is with us. It cannot be overemphasized that the name Eman suggests an allusion to Jesus Christ; Eman bears the sin of the community as a carrier. Socially, the name replicates religion that is Christianity. In these ways, *The Strong Breed* offers us the cleanest, most simple of affiliative plot: it seems a confrontation between son-rebel and traditional father. This fact actually integrates the biblical story about the prodigal son. Additionally, when this analysis emphasizes the concept ‘patriarchy’, it gives ways to find another aspect of biblical allusion. In fact, God created woman as well man in the divine image, and gave both man and woman a divine mandate to exercise dominion over the creation, not over each other.

Kongi's Harvest presents the most universal and dramatic of contrasts – joy and pain, fulfilment and sterility, life and death – by reaching out to the Christian tradition, especially the gospel according to Saint Matthew. The Carpenters' Brigade sings ‘And Kongi is Our Saviour/Redeemer, prince of power’ (116). The allusion to Herod's order to give him ‘on a dish the head of John the Baptist’ points to the great model on which Soyinka conceived this climax. In any event, *Kongi's Harvest* presents the theatrical equivalence of the biblical story.

Chapter three analyses plots, theatrical structures and dramatic effects. The plots of destiny, the plots of character, the plots of thought, and flashbacks are the dramatic structures that Wole Soyinka uses in his plays. They respectively reflect the inability to comprehend the complication of existence, even though enormous sacrifices have been offered; reveal one's responsibility for his own misfortunes; refer to failure to achieve what one planned to do because of wrongdoings; concern the experience of a series of misfortunes but managing to overcome them; refer to sympathetic hero who experiences a series of misfortunes but succeeds in overcoming them all; concern a

character who goes through life transition; refer to a noble character who is tested to the extreme; refer to a protagonist who learns something important; refer to tension between thought and feeling; relate the new world to the old.

Wole Soyinka demonstrates that symmetry, balance, dissymmetry, antisymmetry, near symmetry, inverted symmetry, and opposition are the major structural elements in his play. They are manifested at the levels of the general style, important ideas, objects, characters, etc. This study considers dramatic effects as synonymous with 'theatrical devices'. They include: physical actions, facial expressions and sound effects, music and dance. Through the language of their bodies, characters in drama reveal their attitudes, feelings and meanings to other characters.

Dramatic effects include dance and songs. The different modes of dance are: the 'dance of exorcism', 'dance of welcome', 'dance of Half-Child', 'dance of the unwilling sacrifice' and 'dance around the totem' are used in *A Dance of the Forests*; 'dance of the lost traveller', 'communal or festive dances', 'individual dances', 'the mime of the white surveyor', and 'dance of triumph' in *The Lion and the Jewel*; 'royal dance' in *Kongi's Harvest*. As far as songs are concerned, they include the following types: 'song of welcome' in *A Dance of the Forests*; 'songs of regret and anger', 'song of protest', 'bridal songs', 'song for celebrating marriage' in *The Lion and the Jewel*; 'praise-songs' in *The Lion and the Jewel*, *Kongi's Harvest*, and *The Road*; 'songs of political conflict' in *Kongi's Harvest*; 'songs of the passage of life to death' and 'war-chants' in *The Road*. All these songs are ritual.

The last chapter examines theatricality: proverbs and performance. Wole Soyinka uses proverbs in his plays as one of the languages of drama. The performance of proverbs reveals the fullness and significance of drama. Wole Soyinka uses proverbs as discursive tools in the plays to re-educate Europeans on the aesthetics of traditional African literature that was invoked before European invasion in Africa. The proverbs selected deal with the following themes and sub themes: past, present and future; on going conflict of values; rejection of modern technique; power and wealth; Eurocentric worldview; Afrocentric worldview; mediation of conflict; and religious hypocrisy. They specifically promote the revalidation of the past after its examination. Proverbs teach that people should not try to solve a minor problem by taking action that will cause much greater harm. The situation of having not a house of one's own causes dishonour and lack of dignity. People should have one eye on the future and

one eye on the past. Proverbs exemplify the value of patience. They also deal with atrocious experience of the past. People should not try their hands at preventing whatever happens according to time. They convey the message of inevitable. There is no need to make choices which are not about to resolve a difficulty. The situation of hope coming after the people have overcome troubles like 'the sickness', and the malevolent creative force which then, continually makes the people experience such cycle of eternal sufferings, 'darkness'. Through proverbs characters express their optimism for the future, consideration and reverence to elderly in politics. The traditional king's misfortune is a danger for the all community under his rule and government. A common-sensed man who is always successful, perseveres and gives up only when he attains his objectives. A responsible father educates his child without intermediaries. Proverbs are used to expose the lack of the king's protection, political persuasion and pressure, the honour and dignity attributed to the possession of money, and getting very rich very quickly dishonestly, patience needed as a methodology in order to be successful in their attempt to limit domination, confidence for a glorious future, with leadership which should be carried out by a responsible youth; blame, call to order occasioned by avoidable lack of discipline, non-respect of commander mode, the individual own responsibility to approve or disapprove the handling of affairs at any level of human life. Through proverbs the people express their faithfulness to their god and cannot refuse the Beggar who is shackled by every god. Women are the same. They are always unsatisfied. Proverbs express the overriding demands of taking care of one's family before caring other; mockery to someone. People should stop meddling in what does not concern them.

Through the use of proverbs men express their optimism to win any woman they really love, the possibility for any man to change his old wives by another very young girl, when he has learnt to tire them; the obligation and the necessity for men to carry on all the steps leading to the achievement, accomplishment of any process, procedure, etc. so that success, win are theirs without any other condition. A man who really falls in love with a beautiful woman, girl cannot give up and abandon before he wins her because of other men's ambition to court the same woman, girl. The fox is wise that he does miss any new and nice prey. Through proverbs, people promise their beginnings will be modest, and they express their complementary to others. Selected proverbs teach that, the most glorious task of man is to be doing good things, because

memories of men's lives, their works and their deeds will continue in others. Proverbs convey the message to show empathy, and the capacity for two parties in opposition to do something themselves that will gratify both of them. Neutrality helps mediating conflict successfully. Religious leaders are all hypocrites. They are all the same.

CONCLUSIONS

The first chapter of this dissertation examined aesthetic frames as contained materials and dramatic forms containers. The situation is the same with aesthetics and politics because at this level, aesthetics is synonymous with literature, the art based on imagination, the discipline which creates and re-creates meaning through observation, imagination, in one word, fiction. The word politics concerns every aspects real social life that literature addresses. Wole Soyinka frames political and social issues in his dramatic works in the same ways as his Western favorites. They made use of imaginative literature as a means in the day the revolutionary bourgeoisie conducted a violent struggle in the interests if its classes. Light came from literary school trends such as realism, Marxism, romanticism, structuralism, post structuralism, modernism, etc. These approaches help Wole Soyinka through reading of his European favorite's literary works (about war, colonialism, domination, etc.) to frame issues with the aim of claiming human rights, more human rights, democracy, freedom, etc. He uses comedy, lyric, epic, satire, proverbs, balance, reference, allusions, dance, songs, movements, etc. as frames.

In addition, in Wole Soyinka's plays under investigation, language is the building block of his writings. In the plays, language is inventive and overcomes the readers expectations of what words can do in close relation with the main and sub themes of the works. The varieties of language we have found out, described, and analyzed are: American Colloquial English, simplified English and Nigerian Pidgin English. The sophistication of Wole Soyinka language in his plays is based on the fact that he has a very good command of the English language. This proves the use of the Standard English in his literary works under scrutiny. At this level, there is a unity between all the varieties of language used in the plays, and the themes they deal with. Apart from language varieties, the high level of intertextuality conveys the message of the plays. Intertextual varieties in plays are: citations, allusions, and reference, with their respective sub categories. In this respect, we find that they are all integrate part

of Wole Soyinka's aesthetic features, and we read them in the perspective of fulfilling the function of utility.

As for the plot, we have tried to decipher, the different categories of plots: plots of destiny, plots of characters, plots of thought and flashbacks, through which Wole Soyinka has depicted the life of his people. It results from this analysis that another country cannot be held responsible for the ills in one's own country. It is the duty of the citizens to rid their country of any evil. To this effect, if the people were not alert and vigilant, history would repeat itself and they would repeat their mistakes, which would eventually prove detrimental to the evolution and progress of their country. It would also do well for the Nigerians and any people in the world, to remember the bloody past and learn lessons from it, and take care not to repeat the heinous and grievous crimes and mistakes in the future. This may also mean that Nigeria's newly installed leaders as well as many fellow intellectuals are presented with a pageant of black Africa's recurrent stupidities, that is to say, a spectacle designed to remind citizens of the chronic dishonesty and abuse of power which colonialism had bred into generations of native politicians. We find it better to mention that Soyinka's aesthetics is the complex fusion of Yoruba festival traditions with European modernism.

In addition, this analysis results also in the understanding of the individual lone-act-of courage in the effort of saving humanity wherever such an individual possesses the will and the right resources. There is a need to impose a spiritual pattern on one's existence that is also to grope through an absurd existence for divine salvation, but not with blind hope. Furthermore, it is impossible for an individual to escape his own destiny mainly of traditional symbolic sacrifice. There is individualism up to a point; even at these the individual is subordinate to the concerns of the community in which he lives. We may also have the result which follows: people who have received a very high education, for instance the Professor uses his literacy for wrongdoings such as forging documents (driving licences), removing traffic signs because of his own ambition of stocking his store from the abundant sacrifice of wrecks and road victims. He also sees the accident as a sacrifice to a thirsty river goddess. Paradoxically he avoids making it himself because even though the word is manifested through possession, professor is never really possessed.

Furthermore, Wole Soyinka in plays keeps on demonstrating that symmetry, balance in its types of near symmetry, dissymmetry, anti-symmetry, inverted symmetry, and opposition are the major structural elements in his literary works which are manifested at the levels of the general style of the plays to the extent that the author divides the plays two or three parts, presents one as a whole, and divides another in

five scenes. The elements we consider in this symmetrical analysis of Soyinka's plays are: characters, ideas, text structures and compositions. All these structures are used to convey the messages of the plays such as harmony (very rarely), disharmony, conflict, opposition, etc. In addition, reading through extra dramatic devices it comes to light that, these devices of the same categories, and of different kinds occur and co-occur in the same excerpt to mean the characters' feelings and intentions.

In addition, all the selected songs used by Wole Soyinka in his plays helps one understanding the meanings that the author creates, as they are all linked to the main themes of the plays. These songs of different categories also show that Wole Soyinka successfully does the mixture of genres in his plays under investigation. He mixes drama with other literary genres, such as poetry, tales, etc. Figures of speech are also used in the songs. The most used are repetitions, similes and metaphors. This study through literary sensibility and aesthetic judgement makes us considered all these features as part of Wole Soyinka's aesthetics.

From the analysis of proverbs that we have done above, it seems clear that Wole Soyinka has drawn on both his Yoruba culture and on European to construct an oral discourse through which he successfully conveys his messages. They are ranged as proverbs and temporality, proverbs on going conflict of values; proverbs on rejection of modern technique; proverbs on power and wealth; proverbs on Eurocentric worldview; proverbs on Afrocentric worldview; proverbs on mediation of conflict; and proverbs on religious hypocrisy. In addition, the proverbs we have analysed reveal that Wole Soyinka who put them in the mouths of his characters grew up in a social environment in which words are integrate part of culture. In those proverbs we read images and symbols, which make also some of them metaphors, fables, and riddles. Our literary sensibility makes us point this situation as an aesthetic feature in Wole Soyinka's plays under consideration.